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PARLIAMENT AND THE WAR

THE critical debate that ended with an oratorical triumph for the Prime Minister marks the conclusion of a well-defined stage in this war. A year ago, after the Norwegian fiasco, this coalition government was formed. Its first impetus carried us through the crisis of last summer; it put the country at least partly on a war footing and under its leadership the R.A.F. was able to defeat the German attack in the autumn. But it promised far more. The recent disasters, which are so unpleasantly parallel to those of last spring, are in part at least due to its predominantly nationalistic and imperialistic outlook. It failed to make this a "people's war" (with unmistakable results on production); the Socialist changes necessary for a state of siege and necessary to-day in peace and in war were not attempted; its whole war strategy has been bedevilled by its efforts to make friends of dictators like Franco and out-of-date Conservative forces like the Arab landlords. Its refusal of India's offer of co-operation has made nonsense of its plea to be fighting for "democracy," with unfortunate effects in the United States. Mr. Churchill made a very fine speech indeed; but he gave this country no dynamic to place against Hitler's confident assertion of mastery in Europe. And he did not discuss the extraordinary position of this island between the two greater industrial Powers of Germany and America.

On the immediate questions of the war the debate left a disturbing impression of indifferent capacity and tactical optimism: we await the figures that measure our losses in the Atlantic Battle with anxiety. But as an assurance of survival we can now assume that Mr. Roosevelt's administration has taken the crucial decision. Mr. Stimson spoke with all the sense of responsibility of a Secretary of War who has served as Secretary of State; he is, moreover, a Republican who stands above party. He warned Americans that if they allowed us to be defeated, they could not stand up alone to the sea-power of the Axis, omnipotent in three continents. He reminded them that their ancestors who won their independence "gave more than money to the cause of freedom." He said in the clearest language that they must steel themselves to face the sacrifice, if need be, of American lives, and he put the plain question: "Shall we now flinch and permit these munitions to be sunk in the Atlantic Ocean?" While he spoke, the State Legislature of Texas gave the answer of the South, in a vote of 100 to 15 in favour of the escort of transatlantic convoys by American warships. The Southern States are more nearly unanimous in this matter than the rest of the country. We must prepare ourselves for stubborn opposition and perhaps for delay, but we can no longer doubt that the administration is ready to lead in a great step forward for which the majority of Americans are at length morally prepared. It is reasonable to hope that within a week or two the United States will become, in the words of the President of Harvard, "a naval belligerent." Nothing less will serve; we note the tactics that Hitler is likely to pursue in the Atlantic. We must expect him to continue his concentrated attack on the western ports of England and Scotland and then to tighten his hold, before any invasion is prepared, by making such islands as Cape Verde, the Canaries and the Azores into German bases. Need Britain leave it to Hitler to be first in these islands?

While this good news from across the Atlantic transforms for us the distant prospect, we must face with honest realism the disturbing prospect that faces us in the Middle East. We may draw some encouragement from local successes round Tobruk and elsewhere in Libya, while in Abyssinia the final liquidation of the Italian armies cannot be much longer delayed. With the veterans from Greece and East Africa we should now have men enough in Egypt for the defence of the Canal: if we are still short of planes and tanks, it is an encouragement that American ships laden with these indispensable things have now begun to reach the Red Sea. But here our grounds for self-congratulation cease. Though our Fleet may "command" the Mediterranean in the sense that it can always win a battle, it seems that it cannot prevent the seizure, one by one, of the islands that fringe the Turkish coast—after Lemnos at the Straits, Chios, Mytilene, the Cyclades and probably Samos. Turkey seems to have lost any will to resist she ever possessed and has passively submitted to encirclement. We may learn in due course that a force of German air-borne troops has flown from the islands by way of Syria to the Mosul oil-field. Our Indian troops have, to be sure, occupied Basra and the R.A.F. has disposed easily enough of the Irak air-force. But Mosul lies over 400 miles from the port of Basra. Its oil is not indispensable to us, though it would be invaluable to the Germans. But if Hitler could establish himself here, our really vital source of supply in neighbouring Iran, with the great refinery at Abadan, would be in grave danger both from aerial and land attack. From all we can learn, the politically-conscious part of the people of Irak is no more friendly to us than the army. Germany's victories have dazzled the Arabs and this may be true also of the Persians. The tone of Mr. Eden's references to Rashid Ali, who has flatly thrown over the Treaty and become a belligerent tool of the Axis, was not re-assuring.

The discussion of strategy which Mr. Eden opened in a weak and far from candid speech failed to answer the real case against the War Cabinet's policy. We have never questioned the wisdom of helping the Greeks, and we believe Mr. Eden when he tells us that after the fall of Benghazi our men needed rest and our tanks an overhaul. He drew from this the conclusion that they could not have pushed on to take Tripoli. Perhaps not. But we had ample forces available for that operation, which we chose to employ in Eritrea, Somaliland and Abyssinia. These campaigns in East Africa were as brilliantly organised as they were successful. That does not suffice to justify them from the standpoint of strategy. There was at this stage no need to wipe out the Italians in this region. They were isolated: they could receive neither supplies nor reinforcements: they were too demoralised to attack us to any purpose either in the Sudan or in Kenya. We might have given the Patriots some help and postponed this campaign to a more convenient season. It is true that it opened the Red Sea to American ships, but these have only now begun to arrive. Had we used these considerable forces elsewhere, we might have taken Tripoli and so forestalled the German invasion of Egypt. Had we acted promptly we might even have occupied Sicily before the Germans reached it. For the rest, Mr. Eden had no defence either for the inadequacy of our Intelligence Service which the German landing in Tripoli took by surprise, or for the blindness of the Foreign Office and its men on the spot to what was going on in Irak. It assumes that every Muslim grandee like every Catholic dictator is necessarily our friend. By applauding the loyalty and firmness of the Turks, Mr. Eden succeeded only in deepening our doubts of his capacity to think and observe with realism. Neither in its broader strategy nor in its diplomacy is the War Cabinet's record worthy of the brilliant achievements of General Wavell and Admiral Cunningham. The detailed work has been better than the plan.

Stalin Alone

Stalin's assumption of the Premiership of the U.S.S.R. means that with the coming of summer when an invasion of Russia by Germany becomes technically feasible, Stalin publicly assumes sole responsibility for Russian policy. Molotov has lost favour since his abortive mission to Berlin; in so far as he has a successor his place is apparently taken by Dekanosanov, who is now back in Russia, after experience in Germany and who has the advantage of being himself a Georgian who talks to Stalin in his own language. We doubt an early armed clash between the Bolsheviks and Nazis; but it is possible, and if it happens soon, anything like a united war effort between Russia and the Western democracies would be unlikely in view of their present bad relations with the U.S.S.R. Stalin's policy is to avoid war, to obtain the highest price possible for keeping out of it and to strengthen his position against future German attack wherever possible—particularly in the Baltic, where German troops in Finland are a new factor, and in the Middle East, especially in Iran, where he is by no means sure that Britain will maintain her position. The merger of the two most powerful positions in the country in Stalin's hands may be considered an act of mobilisation, which is likely to attract more notice in Berlin than the hints and ricochet-warnings which Moscow addressed to Germany in the past five months through Rumania, Bulgaria, Turkey and Jugoslavia. Once before, in another crucial phase of Soviet history when the Bolsheviks were engaged in desperate foreign and civil wars, supreme direction of party and State were placed in the hands of a solitary man—Lenin. Stalin, of course, has always been much more and much less than a government leader. Since he started to vanquish Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kameniev in the party councils in 1924, his will has been ascendant, but the only government posts he ever actually filled were those of Commissar of National Minorities in the Soviets' infant years and very recently membership with about a score of others in the praesidium of the Supreme Soviet.

The Home Front (*By an Economic Correspondent*)

On the eve of the critical debate Mr. Churchill carried out some minor reconstruction of his Ministry. Lord Beaverbrook takes over an undefined Ministerial position; according to report, he is to concern himself chiefly with publicity and home propaganda. He has drive which was invaluable for aircraft production: I see no reason to think that he understands the kind of dynamic now required for this state of siege. His place at the Ministry of Aircraft Production is taken by Mr. Moore-Brabazon, who has shown himself an outspoken back-bencher. But his record at the Ministry of Transport is not very inspiring. Will he be able to continue the expansion of our aircraft production, whilst discontinuing the piratical activities of his predecessor and paying sufficient attention to the necessity for quality in types apart from the volume of output? Will he be able to check the enthusiasm of those who want to prepare the punishment of the Nazis by ordering vast numbers of bombers before we have made this island and the outlying posts of the Empire safe by producing sufficient fighters and fighter pilots? The whole strategy of the war seems involved in this decision.

* * *

The amalgamation of the Ministry of Shipping and Transport is a measure long asked for by the critics of the Administration and is to be welcomed. The new Minister has a great reputation for energy and complete lack of prejudice or inhibition when tackling difficult new problems. The task facing him is appalling. The transport system, including shipping, is the worst and most dangerous bottleneck in our war-effort. If the amalgamation of the two Ministries means but the preliminary step to a real pooling of all transport facilities under State control, it is the most important forward move which has been accomplished for many a day. But we must have real pooling of the operating units, not merely of the controls. And even a widening of the bottleneck does not do away with the need of a complete change in what is allowed to pass through it. If we continue to clutter up our roads with jay drivers, consuming petrol (and why, please, not abolish the *basic* ration, depending on the mere ability to pay taxes, instead of cutting the extra-allowance, which might mean real hardship or weakening of the war effort?) if we continue to over-consume and clutter up our shipping facilities with food and feeding-stuffs, then little improvement can be hoped for. As Mr. Shinwell rightly asked, if this amalgamation is right—and Mr. Churchill must think so—is not the amalgamation (or at least co-ordination under a non-departmental War Cabinet Minister) of the foodstuff position, of arms supply production, social and home defence services, equally imperative? We recommend those who want the case for swiftly adopting the technique of siege economics to read the two leaflets issued by the 1941 Committee (24 Farm Street, W.1.).

* * *

I did an injustice to the Ministry of Food in assuming last week that it was responsible for the advice generally given in the Press that housewives should leave their washing on Monday morning and comb the shops for oranges, on the principle of first come first served. But whoever was responsible for this statement was guilty of intelligent anticipation since the policy of the Ministry led to precisely that result. I say "policy" because there was a policy behind the Ministry's arrangements. A comparatively small supply of oranges—about one for every seven of the public—was available and the Ministry arranged for an equitable *territorial* distribution, leaving local distribution to go by chance or favour. This ensures a uniform measure of disgruntlement over the country, but otherwise does not seem to improve matters. The result was first come first served with all the opportunities for favouritism. What was the right policy? Small children and the sick in hospitals might have received all the oranges, or perhaps—and this I think would have been the best arrangement—oranges could have been best sent to Coventry, Plymouth and other badly blitzed areas. This would have been fair and would also have appeared fair, which is almost as important. Oxford would not be jealous if Coventry got oranges, but Mrs. Jones in one street of Oxford is likely to be jealous if Mrs. Smith in another street of the same town gets oranges which she cannot obtain. In all such cases the Ministry should give publicity to its policy as much in advance as possible. Actually in this case, the unofficial advice came out on the Saturday and the Ministry tried to catch up on the following Tuesday. The effect was merely one of muddle. Food is not the only home problem which calls for greater candour and lively publicity on the part of the Government, but it is probably the most important one.

The War Debate (*By a Parliamentary Correspondent*)

The Prime Minister, of course, obtained an overwhelming majority for his vote of confidence. The debate was far too much like an old-fashioned party debate in which speakers try to score points, and the Premier's own speech was rather a great dialectical triumph than an informative answer to critics. The great ovation accorded him after his speech was a recognition of his oratory, but the uneasiness about innumerable aspects of our war effort was by no means allayed. The Prime Minister dealt quite inadequately with the factual side of the case presented by Hore-Belisha, Shinwell and Lloyd George. He dismissed Lloyd George with the jibe that his arguments were worthy of a Pétain. In fact, there was nothing defeatist, and much that was realistic and constructive, in Lloyd George's speech.

Lloyd George gave the House the first comprehensive picture of our grim situation. He also outlined a policy about man-power, food and industrial production that would help in the task of enabling this country to hold out until the full weight of American assistance was available. That, as he explained, must be long delayed. Throughout his speech he expressed his belief that provided they know the facts the British people will respond to all the demands made upon them. He stated the case for a small War Cabinet of Ministers without portfolio, urging that no Prime Minister, however brilliant, could cope with the problems unless there were by his side men who could stand up to him on vital issues of policy.

The Prime Minister scouted these arguments and paid more attention to Hore-Belisha, whom he castigated for his failure to produce more tanks during the period he was in office. Attlee, too, devoted the major part of his speech at the close of the first day's debate to an attack upon Hore-Belisha on exactly the same grounds. Feeling was strong in the House that Attlee's speech was a return to politics as a peacetime game. He lacks the great oratorical gifts that saves the Premier from this reproach.

Shinwell's criticisms were not less biting than Lloyd George's or Hore-Belisha's, but for some reason both Attlee and the Prime Minister received them in a friendly mood; neither made any attempt to reply to the fundamental issues which he raised in his usual forthright way. Rumour suggests that the Government hopes to appease Shinwell, but it is doubtful if he would accept a Government post.

To what did the Prime Minister's reply amount when he answered what was after all a consistently critical debate? He said that he did not propose to answer criticisms about supply, shipping and suchlike things; they must be dealt with in secret session. He argued on ominously familiar lines that in driving us out of Europe the Germans have lengthened their communications, and that they are imposing a great strain upon the German army by giving it the task of keeping down the enslaved populations of Europe. He admitted that we have made mistakes and did not explain the failure of our Intelligence Service in the Mediterranean and Balkans. He said that we lost Benghazi without much fighting because of tactical errors on the part of the armoured brigade; but that you must expect mistakes to be made in war.

Although Shinwell had challenged the accuracy of the Prime Minister's previous statements about the tonnage of shipping and the replacements we are likely to get from our own yards and America, the Prime Minister spoke of the shipping situation in the same optimistic vein without giving any facts to justify his optimism. The House must await the secret session.

The failure of Eden to give the House a comprehensive view of the foreign situation, or adequately to explain the failure of his mission to the Near East thoroughly depressed many solid Tory supporters of the Government. The Prime Minister defended the poverty of Eden's statement on the grounds that for him to have said more would have given information to the enemy. When Lloyd George raised the question of the passage of German ships through the Dardanelles both Eden and Churchill seemed to be at a loss; the House got the impression that they had to send out for information.

The full effects of this debate upon the House will take a few days to emerge, but it is unlikely to have the effect of relaxing the pressure of constructive criticism upon the Government.

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INDIA AND THE EMPIRE

WHEN Britain entered the war in September, 1939, Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand made their own declarations of war on Germany. The consent of India was not asked. Although India contains three-quarters of the population of the British Empire, has become during the last twenty years far more nationally conscious and has been promised Dominion status, yet she was brought into the war as if she was of no more account than Fiji or British Honduras. The reply of Congress, which represents the bulk of politically conscious India, was a resolution which condemned Fascist aggression, deplored the British assumption that India would fight, irrespective of the aims of the war, and said:

> If the war is to defend the *status quo*, Imperialist possessions, colonies, vested interests and privilege, then India can have nothing to do with it. If the issue is democracy, then India is intensely interested in it. . . . If Great Britain fights for the maintenance and extension of democracy, then she must necessarily end Imperialism in her own possessions, establish full democracy in India, and the Indian people must have the right of self-determination by framing their own Constitution through a constituent assembly without external interference, and must guide their own policy.

In that case India would "gladly associate herself with the other democracies for mutual defence against aggression and for economic co-operation." This remarkable document was in effect an offer of full aid in the war, provided that the war was for the objects Britain said it was for, and provided that we gave an earnest of our fidelity to these objects by fulfilling our promises to India. This offer was treated with contempt by the Chamberlain Government, and after the formation of Mr. Churchill's Government, which included Labour Members pledged to self-determination for India, no improvement was made. Negotiations have drifted on from that day until this. The Viceroy's conversations with Mr. Gandhi and other Indian leaders proved abortive, and at every stage Mr. Jinnah's objections to any agreement which enlarged the power of Congress and his proposals for a Moslem State in Northern India have been allowed to sidetrack the main issue. Civil disobedience, long threatened and withheld by Congress, at length began in the form of anti-war speeches, and the Pandit Nehru, after Mr. Gandhi the best-beloved and most powerful leader in India, was sentenced to four years' rigorous imprisonment. Some four thousand Congress leaders have since followed him to gaol. A further effort has recently been made to obtain a settlement. All that Britain has offered is an enlarged Advisory Committee to the Viceroy. Congress now demands complete independence. Sir Tej Sapru proposed a compromise that a representative council should be set up which should have Dominion status in international affairs; at the peace conference, for instance, it would speak on behalf of India. Mr. Gandhi, who in recent years has earnestly striven for peace with this country, has apparently despaired of any compromise and states that civil disobedience must go on. Mr. Jinnah also objects. When Mr. Amery points out that the two principal disputants refuse the proposals, and himself turns them down, the Indian press declares that the British Government has rejected the one chance of compromise.

The deadlock appears to be complete. Of all the blunders of Britain's rulers none appears so flagrant or, in the long run, more disastrous, than Britain's refusal of the offer of Congress at the outset of the war. Though Ireland was catastrophically handled in the last war, there was at least the excuse that the extreme party in Ireland was never willing to fight for the British cause. No such excuse exists in the case of the far greater and more serious question of India. For Congress was bitterly anti-Fascist, and it had realised the basic fact of our age that "independence" without arms had become impossible. It was willing to throw itself on to the British side. Perhaps our rulers believe that mass opinion in India does not matter. Since India has been allowed few officers, and since the mass of Indians are not fighting men, they are accustomed to feel contempt for threats of Indian revolt. They can always buy enough Indians to carry on the administration. India's poverty ensures that labour will be forthcoming for the war factories, and Indian capitalists are usually willing enough to produce goods for which we will pay. Nothing could be more short-sighted. The policy of seeking always the friendship of Moslems has been disastrous, as we have seen in the Near East, where Hitler's propaganda has made positive and more attractive offers. German propaganda to-day is immensely active, not only throughout the Near East but also in India. Germany can point to 150 years of British rule, and, ignoring the positive assets that Britain has brought to India, can point out that the mass of Indians remain abjectly poor, that 92 per cent. of them are still illiterate and that by and large Britain has used India as a country for investment, from which she still draws 50 millions in interest alone each year, and treats her as a colony to be administered by civil servants whose pensions the Indian people pay. That British policy has been set upon the road to Indian freedom since 1909 is less likely to be stressed in German propaganda. It is also likely to be ignored by many Indian listeners, who are only aware of the simple fact that their leaders are in gaol and that India has been dragged into a war in which she has no obvious interest.

Whenever proposals are made for any solution of the Indian problem we are told that it is infinitely complex and that none but the man on the spot understands it. To-day the issue is becoming simple. It may become as simple as a struggle between an expiring British Imperialism and an India sentiment which demands the right to make its own muddle in its own way, heedless of the dangers it runs from other more ruthless forms of Imperialism. Soon the sands will have run out. If the Government stated a definite date for Dominion Status and gave the crucial offices of defence and finance to representative Indians, would Congress now accept? Mr. Edward Thompson, who writes with great authority on India, suggested in our columns last week that, late as it was, the British people must understand that these proposals are the least that would induce Indians of any representative quality—Congress, Muslim League or Moderate—to enter the Viceroy's Council. He believes that a settlement on these lines is still possible.

It may now be too late for such a solution. An offer that would once have been hailed with alacrity might now fail to interest those who smart under the sting of humiliation. Mr. Amery, despairing of this line of advance, makes proposals that are in themselves very sensible: he suggests that the communal franchise should give way to an occupational one, which would make the Indian voter think rather as part of an economic than of a political unit. He suggests that if the Muslims will have nothing to do with Federation because it gives too much power to Congress and too little to Minorities which exercise their influence better through the Provinces, then the Federation should have less functions, and that both Congress and the Muslim League will do better if the scope of the Centre is reduced and the powers of the Provinces increased. Well meant and sensible though such proposals are, they mean little to-day if Britain is to attempt to use India merely as a dumb arsenal during the war, a territory from which Princes send money, poverty provides soldiers and wealth provides goods—one in which, in Mr. Thompson's words, subordination is taken for granted as a substitute for that comradeship in a democratic cause of which we once boasted. If in Britain's greatest hour of need India proves an embarrassment and not an ally, if the common people under the flag find that their rulers' talk about freedom is merely so much verbiage to hide the fact they are locked in a struggle between Pluto-democracy and Totalitarianism—then the Empire would disintegrate as soon as danger touched its centre.

A LONDON DIARY

FRIENDS who have been to Plymouth agree that it is the worst blitz yet, that there is no "panic" evacuation but a perfectly sensible determination on the part of a large number of people to disperse over the countryside at nights. In a word, people who have got no private cars and no dormitory towns to go to, do for themselves exactly what any resident of Chislehurst, Purley or Welwyn does every night. Their method has been simple. Contractors who are willing enough to have their lorries safe from the bombs take people out into the countryside at night and the lorries are covered over with carpets or material of some kind and prove comfortable beds. The food situation is, I gather, now pretty good. Once again the indefatigable Mr. Banks has displayed the efficiency he has already shown in building up a food service in a number of industrial areas. But note that Mr. Banks is technically only an adviser sent by the Ministry of Food. He has no executive power until requested by the local authorities to take over the job himself. One of the things which this blitz is proving beyond all possibility of dispute is that we need a regional policy of services based on the present standard of transport, that is the motor or lorry. When there is difficulty in Coventry, Leamington and Kenilworth are found to be in the same region as Coventry. When there is trouble in Plymouth, a wide hinterland automatically becomes the *Lebensraum* of Plymouth people. I believe the Minister of Home Security might do a tremendous job if he cut the usual cackle and appointed from each area the most efficient and popular local organisers to construct regional services in full co-operation with the Ministries of Food, Health and Home Security. The public would leap at a big administrative change and when a town was subjected to the blitz, it would not have to wait for several days until the new services were improvised and then taken over by Whitehall.

* * *

It is a general truth in war that both sides underestimate their own losses and fantastically exaggerate those of the enemy. If you want evidence of this in the last war you will find it in Mr. Lloyd George's *War Memoirs*. If you want to be convinced that the same habit persists now you will find it in the rival statements of British and German propaganda about losses in the Balkans. Since the British authorities cannot possibly know what the German casualties are, they would have been wiser not to guess at a figure like 70,000, which is unlikely in view of the nature and speed of the campaign. I am not suggesting that Hitler's figure of a 1,000 or so killed is likely to be true; he may have "forgotten" the Austrian troops he used, or more likely just wanted a figure that sounded well in Germany. But notice that the figures of killed and wounded in this war have never so far been high. General Wavell's advance was astonishingly cheap, and the Germans in North Africa have apparently lost very few men. The Abyssinian campaign resembles the others in producing many prisoners and comparatively few casualties. Hitler conquered Holland, Belgium and France without any large losses. That is the nature of mechanised war. Civilians may get massacred and the percentage of airmen killed is large. But the knights in their plated armour tanks aim at no prolonged slaughter; if they get through, the position is turned and the troops cut off may have to surrender. Part of the tactics is to throw everything into the attack together so that, at the beginning, the attackers lose large numbers in a short time. This is foolishly described in the press as Hitler's callousness of the life of his soldiers. In fact it is economy, for the attack is apt to be so heavy that it goes through, and then the initial casualties are all. The German High Command has in fact been sparing of German life in its attacks, and British commanders who know their job are learning the same technique. General Wavell understands modern war. Look at his book, *The Palestine Campaigns* (Chap. ix), where he writes on the value of mobility: "The experiences of these campaigns show the value of speed on the battlefield in producing results and saving casualties." He adds in a footnote: "Speed is, unfortunately, a most expensive commodity; alike in battleships, motor cars, racehorses and women, a comparatively small increase in speed may double the price of the article."

* * *

The *Sunday Times* recently published an obtuse letter about Virginia Woolf's suicide from the wife of a Bishop. She was vexed because the Coroner suggested that Mrs. Woolf might have been much more than usually sensitive to the strain of the war. This letter produced a devastating reply from Desmond MacCarthy, who said that he "could explain to Mrs. Hicks," but that it would not be "worth while," why some people have an "exceptional capacity for being mentally distressed." Leonard Woolf himself also wrote to state the facts. Of this I am glad, since until Mr. Woolf felt ready to explain that Mrs. Woolf had killed herself because of her fear of madness and not because she did not like the war, it was difficult for anyone else to write on the subject. Mrs. Woolf was the one woman of certain genius (as opposed to exceptional talent) that I have ever known. Nobody who knew her at home, who knew her wit and the lucidity and brilliance of her conversation, would ever have guessed that she lived all her life under this shadow. She suffered from an acute form of what doctors, for want of a better name, call neurasthenia. Though, in three-quarters of her life and mind, she was the gayest and sanest of people, the slightest strain would provide symptoms of "neurasthenia" and there was always the threat, if the strain continued, of insanity or suicide. Leonard Woolf refers to her mental breakdown about twenty-five years ago, and I see no reason why the world should not now know that the struggle against the disease returning was incessant. Virginia Woolf had just completed a novel; it was always at such times, when her vitality was exhausted, that the danger of madness and her fear that it would prove incurable were greatest. Most of us believed that the danger had passed, and her intimate friends have been so shattered by her death that few of them have been yet inclined to write about her. David Garnett was persuaded to write the excellent but much too short appreciation in this journal, Desmond MacCarthy contributed half a column to the *Sunday Times* and has promised soon to write in these columns a much fuller appreciation of her work. As time goes on, other friends of hers who have understood her work, or felt the influence of her personality, will also be able to write. At the moment they feel as if a colour had disappeared from the world.

* * *

Some weeks ago I referred to the singular restraint of Señor Negrin, who had not given interviews or written articles or even a book to reply to his detractors or to defend his own record in Spain. Señor Araquistain, once a close intimate of Caballero and a supporter of the Spanish Government, replied in a letter that was published here, saying that Negrin had defended himself in a pamphlet which he offered to lend me. I have now had time to examine its contents and I find that it completely supports my view of Negrin. The pamphlet consists of a correspondence between Negrin and Prieto. The first letter is a very friendly one from Negrin in New York, who suggested that with a view to removing past misunderstandings he should see Prieto when visiting Mexico City, where Prieto was living. Prieto replied in an extremely hostile letter in which he refused to meet Negrin and insisted that any discussion must be by correspondence. Negrin replied shortly, and most of the rest of the pamphlet, more than half its total length, is taken up with a long letter by Prieto attacking Negrin. There is no reply from Negrin, nor, indeed, is there any indication that he was consulted about the publication of the pamphlet by Prieto's friends.

* * *

A friend who recently spent a week in a public ward of a great London hospital writes me an interesting letter. His actual experience as an in-patient has left him a lyrical champion of the efficiency of the organisation and of the skill, patience and, above all, the "vocational happiness" of doctors and nurses alike. But he goes on to say that this experience does not, unfortunately, modify his view of the treatment of out-patients at the same hospital.

> I had to make three out-patient attendances before I went into hospital, and each time I had to wait three hours before I was seen by the doctor. I was prepared for this and read contentedly, but the rest of the queue grumbled incessantly and surely with every justification. The Association of Industrial Medical Officers in its evidence before the Royal Commission on Workmen's Compensation says that the absence of an appointments system indicates a failure on the part of the hospitals to pay due attention to the economic lives of their patients. Quite so. The matter is all the more serious in wartime. If each one of us in that queue had been a munitions worker there would have been a very definite subtraction from the national effort. No doubt there are difficulties in the way of an appointments system, but if only the hospitals would give up the idea that it is only the time of the doctors that is valuable, this is, surely, a soluble problem of organisation.

To which I will add that the efficiency of hospitals seems to vary astonishingly. The other day I helped a friend who had had a bad accident in a blitzed house round to a first-aid station in a big hospital. The patient came out with a bandaged leg and the bandage came off almost at once. We went back, and the bandage was improved. It came off again. We went to another hospital, where the doctors were as shocked as medical etiquette allows to see the dressing put on at the first hospital, had the patient under an anaesthetic for three-quarters of an hour, put in a number of stitches and did a first-class job. But for the accident of the bandage coming off, and my friend going to the second hospital, that leg would not be healed yet.

* * *

The other day I picked up an interesting volume (published by Murray in 1936) which contains letters between members of the Romilly and Edgeworth families in the years 1813–18. On February 6th, 1816, when the long war had at last reached its end, Richard Lovell Edgeworth added this postscript to a letter to Anne Romilly (wife of Sir Samuel Romilly):

> I dare not trust myself to speak of politics; my sentiments are so very different from those which are popular. It appears that there are one or two problems in political economy which have never been solved by any writer from Smith to Dumont.
>
> Why has the return of peace plunged every part of the British Empire into pecuniary distress?
>
> How has plenty produced poverty?

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of this column goes this week to W. C. Kerr.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

In India Lord Halifax was regarded as a holy man; in his own country he is held by many to be a saint. . . .

He is a mystic first and foremost, and none the less of a mystic for being an M.F.H. There is, indeed, something in the hearty pursuit of blood sports which demands mysticism, even if it be only the mild mysticism of a worship of traditional ritual.—*Nottingham Evening Post.*

After a silver wafer box worth £4 had been stolen from Runwell, Essex, parish church—one of several recent thefts—the rector posted this notice on the church door:—

"The thief may be quite sure that unless he (or she) restores it a blight will rest upon himself and his family. Christian experience has found this invariably to be true."—*Sunday Express.*

I do not know that we have not suffered from a super-abundance of intelligence in recent years.—Mr. Ernest Brown.

EAST IS EAST

[Stalin made a surprise appearance at the station when Matsuoka was preparing to leave. . . . The two statesmen were overcome by emotion and embraced each other. Most significant was the remark made by Stalin in parting: "You are Asiatic, so am I."—*Asahi Shimbun*, April 27th.]

WHEN Stalin popped down to the station to kiss Matsuoka good-bye
With a warmth that is seldom engendered by a common Neutrality Pact,
The entourage, schooled to surprises, all caught themselves wondering why,
And the highest Intelligence Circles could not state how the world would react.

When Stalin embraced Matsuoka with hardly controllable tears,
The world, which awaits new alignments with settled and justified gloom,
Remarked, if these boy-friends united to banish their mutual fears,
It must be against someone for something, and if so, for what, against whom?

By one smack on the station at Moscow all Far-Eastern issues were raised,
The kiss in relation to China the experts set out to define,
And Communists all the world over, already perceptibly dazed,
Awaited in mute acquiescence their cue for a sound Party line.

But the Soviet's subsequent action set wild speculation at rest.
This sign of impulsive affection was merely a matter of race,
Untouched by the fathomless cunning of the weird and inscrutable West,
It was Asia bestowing on Asia a non-ideologic embrace.

For even the Sphinx of the Kremlin is frequently lonesome and glum,
By comrades too long disappointed, by foreigners sadly perplexed,
Herr Ribbentrop, sometimes a caller, has never seemed, somehow, a chum,
And the closest of Soviet advisers may need purging by Saturday next.

And though Britain with buoyant endeavour seeks to rival the charm of Japan,
Cripps is never asked round to the Kremlin to sit down and have a good cry,
Since he's neither Caucasian nor Mongol in the ethnic division of Man
Stalin will not pop down to the station to kiss Britain's envoy good-bye.

SAGITTARIUS

THE MYSTERIES OF ARABIA

(FROM A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT)

THE mysteries of Arabia are not as deep as those of British Foreign Office policy. That a coup such as that of Ali Rashid could be carried out in Baghdad under the nose of Sir Kinahan Cornwallis, a British diplomat with twenty years' experience in Iraq, who at once realised the dangers when he arrived a short time ago, is a matter which seems to demand investigation into events and policy before his arrival. Rumours of the impending rising had been current for months, and Turkish newspapers have already criticised British Intelligence methods. In any case, the British-Arab policy associated above all with the late Lord Lloyd lies in ruins.

In part, the explanation is political: simply the result of appeasing the wrong people, of the blindness of many British officials and diplomats out East, compared to which the policies leading to Munich or Spanish Non-Intervention were enlightened and progressive. The Catholic *Tablet* for instance, not unrepresentative of the minds of many foreign, Indian and Colonial Office officials, only two weeks ago rejoiced that Ali Rashid had failed the Germans, and that Arabs would always prefer British to German influence for the reason, apparently thought sufficient that

> Islam hates the Soviet Union which has always treated its Moslem subjects worse than any other Government in modern history; and Germany has an

undertaking with the Soviet which between the British Empire and the Soviet there is a great and obvious gulf which the Soviet takes pains to widen.

But for the deeper reason of the Iraq debacle, one has to go back to the whole British-Arab cult, to the fascination of desert Arab life on the British Public School mind, and to the "Lawrence Legend." Some years ago, a German newspaper, appraising Lawrence's gifts as guerilla military leader, said that his lightning enveloping attacks on the Turkish left flank in the Palestine campaign bore the mark of military genius. Had General Allenby fully grasped this, had Lawrence's attacks been carried out by ten thousand picked British cavalry and camel corps instead of a small number of fitful and unreliable Arabs, the greater part of Allenby's immense preparations for pushing forward an army of 500,000 against the Turkish Palestine front might have been avoided, and the British Palestine campaign concluded far earlier. Lawrence, however, in his personal attempt to conjure up a far stronger Arab movement than actually existed (as he, in fact, knew) confused the military issue utterly by insisting on purely Arab forces. As a result we had the *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* and the "Lawrence Legend." This legend based itself on the following romantic assumptions:

(*a*) That the Arabs were a great, numerous nation, strong in war, and hence a pillar of British imperialist policy.

(*b*) That the Arabs felt Britain had done a great deal for them and were grateful to Britain.

(*c*) The assumption based on Indian experience, that, say, the sight of R.A.F. men in uniform striding haughtily down New Street, Baghdad, to the Maude Hotel, was enough to overawe the Arabs with the strength of the British Raj.

All are illusions. Actually not more than about 14-15 million Arabs in the Middle East (about 7 million in the Arab Peninsula and about 7 million in Iraq, Syria and Palestine) form a sparse, primitive population of an area more than half the size of Europe, a vital strategic communication centre between India and Europe, containing great natural resources, above all oil, and crying out for development and colonisation. These Arabs must not be confused either with Islam, every year less of a united force in the modern world, nor with the Arab-speaking population of Africa; even the Egyptians, though in certain respects part of the Arab front, are nationally increasingly separatist. Of the Middle East Arab population, only 1-2 million are urban and literate, the rest wretched Fellaheen and Bedouin. In addition, this Arab population is fringed by strong minorities, Assyrians and Kurds in Iraq, Lebanese, Christians, Palestine Jews. In the last war, the Arab countries were conquered after severe fighting by large British forces. The Arab populations could not themselves have achieved their "liberation" and the "Lawrence Legend" has disguised the fact that only a tiny fraction of them fought on the British side against the Germans and Turks, e.g. the urban population of Syria and Iraq remained largely passive, while Ibn Saud, later to become the strong man of the Peninsula, was neutral.

The famous British promises, too, about whose supposed priority there has been so much wrangling, were only typical diplomatic bargains of the time: in the MacMahon letter of 1916, Britain promised the Emir Hussein of Mecca a vaguely large Arab State; to the Jews, in the Balfour Declaration of 1917, a National Home in Palestine; at the same time, the Mosul oilfields were, of course, safeguarded for Britain, while in the secret Sykes-Picot agreement of 1917, more realist about Arab weakness, Britain and France in fact arranged to split Syria and Iraq between them.

As Mr. Antonius has pointed out,* British statesmen were determined to retain Palestine as the strategic bridgehead, and would have found some other pretext, apart from Zionism, if necessary. It is a good thing they did: with the pro-German Arab swing, Palestine is the one safe British centre. Far too much altogether has been made of the Zionist-Arab clash (which could have been mitigated by even an ounce of bold statesmanship) as a conflict affecting the Arab world as a whole. Arab-Jewish relations have been good as well as bad; at the outbreak of the war, for instance, Arab-Jewish relations in Haifa were in fact better than Arab-British relations in Baghdad. A more important cause of Arab discontent was that the French in 1920 deposed Feysal from Syria by brute force, and in 1924-25 waged a bloody war against the Syrians, and that the British Mandate over Iraq in 1920 *began* as it has now ended, with an insurrection in which thousands of Arabs lost their lives. The British political structure in the Middle East was partly fictitious. The choice of the Hashimite family from Mecca as British puppet rulers was unsuccessful. Ibn Saud chased the British protégé out of Mecca; Feysal never became popular in Baghdad, his son Ghazi was a complete nobody; the chess-playing Emir Abdullah of Transjordan, an amiable nonentity on the British pay-roll. Nor were the Arab "States" real. In Transjordan, with a population of 250,000, in the last budget about £25,000 was spent on education, and over £100,000 on police and prisons. Iraq, larger than England in size, had a population of 3 million, which could never by itself have defended its frontiers; a turbulent Kurdish minority, only two real towns, Baghdad and Basra, and the Mosul oilfields, coveted by industrial oil-less States like Turkey and Germany. The country lived on the oil royalties, on some cotton exports which went nearly all to Japan; otherwise there was nothing at all—in fact in the modern sense Iraq was no "State."

In general, the British Middle East lay stagnant until, with the advent of Hitler, two things disturbed it. First the immense influx of German Jews which transformed Palestine. Secondly, the sudden appearance of a new, aggressive Arab nationalism, based on urban young Arabs who, instead of imitating British manners and sports, suddenly organised themselves into "youth movements" and Fascist shirts. British official representations tried to depict the second as due to the first. Actually a far deeper cause was at work.

In the modern world, Arab society remained still based on *medieval* agriculture, with the Fellaheen, i.e. nine-tenths of the population, living on the most primitive subsistence level, without security of tenure, hopelessly and permanently indebted to a small, rapacious landlord-usurer class. In twenty years of British rule (and French rule in Syria) not only were no comprehensive land reforms introduced, but while British policy brought rudimentary modern government, it deliberately left Arab feudalism unchanged. Yet in the modern world, capitalism had to make its inroads. As a result, in every Arab city, in Cairo, in Baghdad, in Damascus, there appeared the phenomenon of thousands of educated young Arabs, either unemployed or else working as clerks on quite inadequate salaries. It is these young town Arabs, mostly half-educated, ignorant of the world, yet wanting their place in the sun, who feel that because of its standstill character, British Imperial rule has barred their way, and who formed the primitive Fascist youth movements, which naturally soon fell under the spell of Axis propaganda promising a great totalitarian Arab State—to-morrow.

With the war, a flood of clever Axis wireless propaganda immediately made this tendency more pronounced, not as might have been expected in Palestine (Transjordan and Palestine Arabs are the only ones in the British Forces), but among the pampered, and Fascist-minded ruling and army class in Iraq, where particularly since General Bekr Sidki's *putsch* in 1936, the pro-British "Lawrence group," headed by Nuri Said, had quite lost influence.

The British Conservative reaction was outlined by Lord Lloyd's *The British Case*: to defeat the godless Nazis by rallying Catholic Fascism in Europe and Islam in the East. Consequently, the offer of a Palestine Jewish army of 60,000, including potentially invaluable technicians, was turned down; though some 7,000 Jewish volunteers fought with British land and air forces in Libya, Eritrea and Greece, mention of their presence was kept out of British communiqués, while unofficial negotiations were opened for a new Arab Federation, including Palestine, but conceived in the British colonial way—through Arab princes, emirs, premiers, and palace groups, never through the wretched Arab masses. Against this, the Nazis intrigued directly with the tough pro-Fascist Arab youth. The Iraqi coup was almost openly organised by the mysterious Herr Grobba, the author of a book *Der Getreidebau in Syrian und Palästina*, and German Minister in Baghdad since 1925. On the declaration of war he moved to Teheran and through the Italian Legation in Baghdad, which remained open, he poured gold, arms and conspirators into Iraq: the Lawrence method with the Arabs, twenty years up to date.

Which of the two policies, that of the Lord Lloyd school and that of the Nazis, had a chance of success with the Arabs, the Iraqi events have shown. What of the future? Ibn Saud, influenced by British victories along the Red Sea, is probably still genuinely neutral. But everywhere else in the Arab East, except in Palestine, the British position is utterly insecure; the Egyptian Arab youth probably differs little in political outlook from that of Iraq. In this situation, two alternatives are open to Britain in this vital strategic area: that policy of suppression combined with continued appeasement which has been invariably unsuccessful from Palestine onwards (and which seems still indicated by attempts to create an "Arab Freedom Army" under Emir Abdullah, that ghost from the past) or as *revolutionary* a change in British treatment of friends and foes in the Middle East, as has been effected in Abyssinia. But such change would probably demand a clean sweep of the men whose out-of-date and unreal and Old School Tie pro-Arab vision has led straight to disaster.

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* *The Arab Awakening*, page 261.

THE ARMY WELFARE OFFICER

THE Army Welfare Officer is a new institution. His job has been stated by the Director-General of Army Welfare and Education, as being

> the maintenance of the morale of officers and men; primarily, to make them fit to carry out their duties as soldiers . . . with the utmost possible efficiency; secondly, in order that their relations with the civil population may be such as to ensure the maximum co-operation between the Army and the nation . . . thirdly, that they, the soldiers, may in due course be better citizens as the result of their service in the Army.

But no one really knows what his duties are.

He holds no rank and is unpaid. I happen to be resident, accessible at any hour. But ordinarily a Welfare Officer has a round of stations which he visits once a week, to clean up cases which have accumulated. As the one man who neither clicks heels nor must himself be heel-clicked, he has advantages no rank could give him. Men rarely talk frankly to a padre, for they expect an excursus on the Commandments. To a Welfare Officer they will talk with a fullness that soon kills all capacity to feel surprise.

Much of this essentially civilian army's troubles come under two heads, sexual and due to enemy action. One man—his wife, child, father, brother, two sisters, grandmother, seven at one blow (as in Grimm's lighthearted story) killed by a bomb—was too dazed for any sharpness of immediate sorrow but wanted help with funeral costs. Another man's family, their house wrecked in London and the people next door all killed, had been evacuated to a Midland town, only to be blitzed again. Mother and four girls under ten years of age were left with one room and one bed. The youngest had been pinned between mangle and dresser and since her rescue had been semi-hysterical. By sheer luck I managed to get them married quarters inside of an hour, and they are with the father again. But how rarely this can happen! Men patrol adjacent hamlets, peering into any place where a home can be found, sounding friends for rumour of vacancies. The moment Gunner Jones or Corporal Robinson are listed for transfer, I have visitors begging me to get them their married quarters.

I get cases of moving courage amid grimmest poverty. Driver McLeod, *né* Kerr (names, of course, fictitious), lantern-featured, intense, had "a vera strrange storry to tell you, sirr." Four years ago, aged twenty-seven, he wished to marry and, looking up his birth certificate, learnt that he was illegitimate. He took his mother's maiden name therefore; to this day he does not know who was his father. "I understood then why my father had always treated me different from the rest. I told my girl, sir, and she said she did na care, it was me she wanted to marry." He fell silent a moment. "No woman, sir, has ever done for any man what that woman has done for me. But if I am ever asked about anything more than four years ago I always say I've forgot or it's too far back. Four years is all I can speak to. Seven years ago, sir" (his face flushed with pride) "I had my name in the papers, but it was as Kerr. I came on the police fighting with some toughs and I joined in. In my city, sir, twice a year they put in the papers cases of good service and my name and portrait were published. But I must forget it, because it was more than four years since." With the dispassionate wisdom of the poor he half regrets the episode. "They gave me two pound, sir. But my wrist was broke and I was off work for seven weeks."

"Father never did anything for us, and my five younger brothers and sisters were brought up in the orphanage till they were sixteen; mother died fourteen years ago. My youngest sister, sir, she came out last year: she's not seventeen yet, and—she's been taken advantage of, sir, she was a baby and knew nothing. She's going to have a child next month, sir. She won't tell the nurses of the hospital who the man is. But she'll tell me, sir" (this with immense confidence), "for she knows she was always my favourite sister." (And I always thought that Peggotty and little Em'ly was a rather precipitous bit of Dickens' melodrama!) "Our own child, sir, died when she was two and we canna have another. I won't risk it, sir. My mother died in childbirth and my wife nearly died. I won't lose her; she and my mother have been my only chums. We've still the baby clothes, sir; we refused to sell them or give them away, though we were often asked to. And now we can use them. My wife says we must make a home for my sister and we are going to adopt her child. But one day it will find out!" His face worked with distress. "No one should ever have to go through what I have, sir."

To comfort him I pointed out how lightly illegitimacy is regarded in higher social circles than his: that even peerages have been inherited under a fraud everyone knew. "Yes, sir. But it's different in a working-class family."

He showed me a letter in which the hospital authorities asked him for half-a-crown weekly during his sister's confinement. He neither drinks nor smokes, and was sending this. "How does your wife live?" He told me; after paying all basic expenses she has 3*s.* 6*d.* left for food." "She can't possibly manage on that." "She does, sir. No woman ever did what she does."

From a small fund given me by a friend I offered him a pound. The offer greatly upset him. "Maggie'll not take it, sir. She'll think I got it from the other men." We looked hard at each other. "Will she take it if you tell her it was sent by an old man who was sorry for two brave women?" "I'll try, sir." (But he left it when he went and had to be fetched back; and next week I saw Maggie's distressed letter. "O Jim, you must have been telling of our troubles.")

He was once a miner, then worked for a municipal water board. If he did 52 weeks in a year he was entitled to a week's holiday on wages. He often did 51 weeks but never 52; the last time he was laid off was in Christmas week. "But my last job" (his face lit up) "was ideal for me! I got good wages, too! Two pound fifteen!" "What was the job?" "I was a scarfie." A scarfie ("scavvie") is a scavenger; he cleans drains and streets.

There was a thing I had never seen in a man so young. When he was stirred his forehead went into deep trenches and filled with blood till nearly purple; I wondered about high blood pressure. He smiled at my ignorance. "My right eye's blind, sir. When I was six I had chickenpox. My mother was away" (I suppose, on the whole-time occupation of which she finally died) "and it got into my eye. Then I got what we call the Glenny blink, sir. It's the lamp you carry on your forehead. It gets scalding hot, so that you have to throw the oil out. I can drive cars no longer, sir. So I work in the kitchen, I wash up and do the floors. But I canna read anything after four o'clock, sir, and I used to read a whole lot. My eye seems to be going and I get shooting pains in it."

I went round to his Company Commander, who had sent him. "Is Driver McLeod's story true?" "Yes." "Then, two things are clear. First, a very small thing will send his mind—and it's a fine mind—over the borderline, from sanity into insanity." "I know you are right." "Secondly, he is going blind." "I know that, too." We took counsel and acted. Driver McLeod's story is not yet finished.

There is a residuum of cases which seem beyond help; no regulation covers everything that is undoubtedly "hardship." What can I do for the officer invalided out in the late fifties with a malignant growth and nearly penniless? For the Cypriot whose old father sleeps in a London shelter each night and by day starves and scrounges? For the staff-sergeant who after a life of blameless service has inexplicably committed offences for which he has gone to a long term of imprisonment, leaving his wife and family presently without his allowances? Yet in each case one must try to do something.

Men come about literally every kind of trouble. One learns the infinite ways in which men and women vex themselves and each other. Learns, too, the strain of this war: how women nag through the mails, complain that other husbands get leave oftener, that life is dull. In many cases, the trouble seems to subside after being talked out: "a timely utterance gave that thought relief." One poor chap had "an inferiority complex, sir. I never had no education. I was kicked in the head by a horse when I was eleven years old and studying hurts me. So I carry with me this little dictionary, sir. My wife gave it me and I try to learn to spell the big words." Another man arrived in my bedroom at close on midnight; he merely wanted to tell someone, not in the Army, of a thing that had been distressing his mind for a dozen years.

It is infinitely easier to show wisdom in another man's affairs than in your own. And, since it is the poor who can best advise you for the poor, when a story begins to stick, drop it and ask advice about another case (carefully disguising all chance of identification). You will be helped, and when you return to the sorrow in hand the narrative will flow smoothly again. If I were a novelist I suppose I should feel daily enriched. But indeed I am; it is amazing what courage underlies our common life and how little most men and women demand.

"Halt. Who goes there?" "Friend." "Advance, friend, and be recognised." Friend advances, and recognition goes up into the blackness in a most unorthodox shout. "Oh, have you heard anything of my divorce yet, sir?" Driver McLeod is at the door, about to go, and his face flashes into one of his rare smiles. "I'll never forget you, sir—not while I live! Captain Harris was the first man who ever let me tell my story to the end without interrupting me! And you was the second!"

I am past military age and there was no work for me in the national effort; I ate and slept (very well) and acted merely as air-raid warden in a fairly peaceful hamlet. There must be many like myself: Oxford and Cambridge colleges abound in men who would make admirable resident Welfare Officers, whose jobs now languish while their stipends continue. No qualities are needed by a Welfare Officer, except patience, pertinacity, and complete freedom from principles, moral or ethical—so that he remembers only that misery is always misery, however it arose.

NOSTALGIA

MENTION of the name of J. W. Good in a newspaper cutting the other day sent me back in memory to a sunny day on which, during the lunch recess, the four cricket pitches on the lawns in front of the school were busy with cricket-balls being smacked, or being meant to be smacked, by happy young human beings ranging in age from near infancy to near manhood. I was myself doing my best—ineffectively—to swipe ball after ball through a school window—I forget whether I ever achieved this ambition—to do so cost the successful batsman half-a-crown, but it was worth it—but when I was at last (or, more probably, almost at first) bowled, I noticed a boy with a grave face and hair of a Munster blackness looking on and, under his arm, one of those grey paper-backed volumes in which the early work of Rudyard Kipling first reached the West. I cannot remember whether I spoke to him, but it was impossible at that time to remain unacquainted for long with a fellow-schoolboy who read Kipling or Stevenson. They were the Great Writers of the age, and to hear either of them praised was to tremble with the happiness of a lover. There was a freemasonry among those who worshipped them as Artists toiling towards perfection in a pot-boiling world.

After I had got to know Jimmy Good, I used often, when walking into town at night—for I had a lazy liking for the streets—to see a shadowy figure coming out from under a lamp-post and greeting me as if it were an unexpected meeting. I do not think we ever made an appointment for those evening walks; but, having met, we would wander down the docks to see the passenger steamers leave or along to the Twin Islands to see the steamers pass slowly through the darkness with their lighted decks, making a boy on shore envious of those who were going somewhere else. Ships were with him a passion, and I sometimes wonder how I got to know so little about them, considering the hours I spent with him at the docks at all times of the day and night—looking at the purple shadows thrown on the harbour water by a sailing-ship's ropes in the midday sun, or standing by the Hailing House as a cargo-boat passed out on its way to foreign parts. He had a Kiplingite gift, however, for acquiring technical knowledge which was always beyond me.

Soldiers I think he loved even more than ships. I am sure he never saw a regiment on the march with its band playing without joining in and marching by its side. He was never happier than on the Queen's Birthday, when a military review was held in Ormeau Park. He loved even the bad language of soldiers, not least that of the local militiamen. He occasionally emulated the strong language—only in the matter of oaths, however, never in obscenity. He laughed cheerfully at obscenities, but never uttered them.

He was happiest of all, perhaps, in having been brought up in a city noted for riots. He would no more have willingly missed a riot than other people would be willing to miss a first night at a London theatre. The son of a head-constable in the R.I.C., he was broad-minded as to the merits of the two forces of rioters, for both were equally hostile to the police, the Orangemen on the ground that they were "Tipperary papishes," the Nationalists on the ground that they were traitors to their country. Hence he took a purely aesthetic pleasure in the combat of rivets and stones. When feeling ran high, he would always make for a point of vantage at a corner at which the Islandmen, as the shipyard workers were called, would be marching home past an especially excitable Nationalist street. And what tales he would bring back after the riot! A friend once said to me: "It's a waste of time going to a riot. Jimmy Good's description of it is ten times as exciting as any riot." He had an extraordinary gift, indeed, for making you feel that, by not having been in the Shankill Road on a certain night, you had missed something more terrific than the charge of the Light Brigade and better worth seeing than the Battle of Waterloo.

Yet I never saw a riot in his company except once, and that only by accident. He had refused to take me along with him into the Nationalist district on the day of a procession on the ground that I had a "Protestant face" and that it would be dangerous. Having had "To hell with the Pope" shouted at me more than once by passing strangers, however, I decided that with luck my face might pass for a "Papish face" even in the Falls Road and set out to meet the procession by myself. I ran into him just as the riot began in the meadows along the side of the road. It was a pretty riot—that rare thing, a riot that involved no danger to the spectator, for it was fought in a field. His eyes were alight with the comedy and excitement of it till it was over, when we walked home together through the Nationalist throng, each of us convinced that he had an unmistakably "Papish face."

I am not sure whether he had a "Papish face" or not. When W. R. Gordon made a bust of him, some of those who looked at it said: "Oliver Goldsmith," and there was a good deal of resemblance between the two countenances. He had beautiful blue eyes which made everyone who knew him, from saint to ruffian, love him. His black hair had a tinge of purple in it, and the bristles on his cheeks grew so strongly that I am sure he had had to begin shaving, like Kipling, long before the normal age. One of his shoulders was a little higher than the other, and the top of one of his thumbs had been blown off in the chemistry class. During his teens he was seldom to be seen in the streets without a book under his arm, for he was as diligent a reader as he was an idler.

He seemed to me to have read everything and to remember everything he had read. All the novelists living and dead, British and foreign, all the poets living and dead, he fed on voraciously. His classroom Horace was scribbled all over with parallel passages, but these were mainly taken from Swinburne and Kipling. His ingenious mind could find some similarity—heaven knows how—between a phrase in Horace and Kipling's cynical line:

> A woman is only a woman, but a good cigar's a smoke.

Yet, though he liked Horace, he never became much of a Latinist. I remember hearing the Latin master one day, after looking through a composition, saying to him with grimly humorous appreciation: "You write Latin like a Bashibazook." Such things, fortunately, he received as cheerfully as if they had been compliments.

Meanwhile, he was himself writing poetry and, better still, getting it printed, sometimes with a guinea reward, in the *Belfast Weekly Newsletter*. To one or two of us alone among his schoolfellows he would show his verses—almost the only occasions on which he ever gave a sign of nervousness. Much as he enjoyed writing, however, he hated the thought of becoming a professional writer, and intended for a time to be a doctor.

He had lost none of his schoolboy tastes by the time he entered Queen's College. He was by now a confirmed smoker of Wild Woodbine cigarettes—no doubt, because he thought of them as the soldier's smoke—and he remained faithful to them till the end of his life. Though he was an obstinately moderate drinker, he also loved the notion of "a pint" and the noise of a public-house towards closing-time.

Eventually, there being nothing else to do, he became a journalist. When I say "there being nothing else to do," I do not mean that he merely drifted into journalism: he was born and bred for the trade; but he was not ambitious to become one. When he did become a reporter in the end, I am sure he got more of the very ecstasy of amusement out of his work than any young journalist of his time. All the public men of Belfast, from Lord Mayors to members of the Board of Guardians, were figures in a vast and unparalleled comedy to him—something to make other cities green with envy. Hearing him describe a meeting of the Board of Guardians, you felt that one of the things not to be missed in this world was a meeting of the Belfast Board of Guardians. He could fit a flower show into a comic saga and make you, because of his description of it, regret that you had not been present at a church bazaar.

Not that his sense of humour was cynical. He had convictions as serious as any man in Ireland. He was a Parnellite as a schoolboy, and remained a Redmondite even when the cause for which Redmond stood had perished. His temperament, however, was not that of a partisan. While working on a Unionist paper, he was quite ready to lend a hand in bringing out a Republican weekly when its editor was ill. You would think that, as a Nationalist, he would have been glad to escape from Belfast Unionism to Dublin; but it took years of persuasion to uproot him. He loved Belfast, as other Nationalists have done, and was as happily at home in it as Socrates in Athens.

In the end, however, he was persuaded to go to Dublin, where he lived through the worst times with the same serene and smiling temper. The paper on which he worked was the pet aversion of the Black and Tans, who raided and hands-upped the office, indeed. So dangerous did it become for members of the staff to go home in the small hours that nearly all of them slept in the building. He always strolled out into the darkness, however, and, if he were challenged on his way home, he would show his pass and name the sound Unionist paper, the *Irish Times*, as the paper for which he wrote. One night he was held up by two masked men dressed like members of the Klu-Klux-Klan. On another night he had a dangerous interview with a Black-and-Tan on the canal bank opposite his lodgings. He continued, however, to go home to bed as usual.

I sent letters of introduction to him with many visitors to Dublin from England and the Continent; and for many of them he was the most memorable person they met during their visit. He could tell them without bias more about Irish people and things than anyone else, could give it a frequent and personal twist of comedy, and could put them in touch with the authorities on all sides. Mr. H. W. Nevinson described him as "the sanest man in Ireland." He was also one of the most generous—generous with his time, generous with his money, generous with his incomparable talk. If a friend of his visited Dublin and, calling on him, found that he had gone to the country for a holiday, Dublin at that moment became a desert, a dead city. . . .

I count myself fortunate in having seen that dark figure, Kipling under arm, on the cricket field that sunny morning.

Y. Y.

THE CENTENARY OF THE LONDON LIBRARY

In May 1841 the London Library was launched on the swelling tides of Victorian prosperity. It celebrates its centenary to-day among the rocks. It is unharmed at the moment of writing—not a volume out of action—but the area in which it stands is cloven by the impacts of the imbecile storm. All around it are the signs of the progress of science and the retrogression of man. Buildings are in heaps, the earth is in holes. Safe still among the reefs of rubbish, it seems to be something more than a collection of books. It is a symbol of civilisation. It is a reminder of sanity and a promise of sanity to come. Perhaps the Nazis will hit it, and it is an obvious target, for it represents the tolerance and the disinterested erudition which they so detest. But they have missed it so far.

Why should a private subscription library, which appeals to only a small section of the community, arouse exalted thoughts?

The answer to this question is to be found in the Library's history, and in its present policy. Speakers at its annual meetings are fond of saying that it is unique, which is more or less true, and that it is typically English, which greatly understates its claims. It is not typically English. It is typically civilised. It pays a homage to seriousness and to good sense which is rare in these islands and anywhere. It has cherished the things of the mind, it has insisted on including all points of view, and yet it has been selective. Ephemeral books, popular successes, most novels, many travelogues and biographies have been excluded from its shelves. And technical treatises, such as have helped to make the mess outside, have not been encouraged either. Of course it has had its lapses; one can find trash in it, and specialisation-lumber also. But its policy has always been to send those who want trash to the chain-libraries, and those who want lumber to their appropriate lumber-room. It caters neither for the goose nor for the rat, but for creatures who are trying to be human. The desire to know more, the desire to feel more and, accompanying these but not strangling them, the desire to help others: here, briefly, is the human aim, and the Library exists to further it.

So much for its seriousness. Its good sense is equally remarkable. For it would be possible to have these admirable ideals, but to render them unacceptable through red-tape. That is the great snag in institutionalism. There may be fine intention and noble provision, but they often get spoiled by the belief that the public cannot be trusted, that it is careless, dishonest, grubby, clumsy, that it must on no account be "allowed access" to the shelves, and is best served from behind a wire netting. The London Library, though an institution, will have nothing to do with this fallacy. It takes the risks. Its members can go all over its book-stores. There is a price to be paid; books do get stolen, or taken out without being entered, or taken out in unauthorised quantities, or kept out too long, or dogs-eared, or annotated in the margin by cultivated scribes who should know better; but it is worth it, it is worth treating the creatures as if they were grown up, the gain to the humanities outweighs the financial loss. Moreover, it is the tradition of the library (upheld by the present librarian and all his staff) to help the student rather than to snub, and this promotes a decent reaction at once. And "help" is indeed too feeble a word; the officials there possess not only good-will, but wide and accurate knowledge, which is instantly placed at the enquirer's disposal.

The library owes its origin to the spleen and to the nobility of Thomas Carlyle. The spleen came first; Carlyle needed books of reference while he was writing his *Cromwell*, he could not afford to buy them all, and the journey from Chelsea to the British Museum Library was a vexatious one. Besides, when he got to the British Museum he found other people reading there too, which gave him the feeling of a crowd, and it is impossible to work in a crowd: "add discomfort, perturbation, headache, waste of health." Grumbling and growling at his miserable fate, he betook himself to the drawing-room of Lady Stanley of Alderley in Dover Street, and burst forth there; even in Iceland, he said, the peasants could borrow books, and take them away to read in their huts during the Arctic night; only in London was there this "shameful anomaly." The company tried to soothe him or to change the subject, but his growls continued; books, books, one ought to be able to borrow books. And before long, he effected one of his junctions between private peevishness and public welfare, and persuaded other men of distinction to combine with him in launching a library. Gladstone, Hallam, Grote, Monckton Milnes joined him. A meeting was held at the Freeman's Tavern to promote a scheme for "a supply of good books in all departments of knowledge," Lord Eliot was in the chair, and Carlyle made a fine speech. It is said to be his only speech. Here are some sentences from it:

> A book is a kind of thing which requires a man to be self-collected. He must be alone with it. A good book is the purest essence of the human soul. . . . The good of a book is not the facts that can be got out of it, but the kind of resonance that it awakes in our own minds. A book may strike out a thousand things, may make us know a thousand things which it does not know itself. . . . The founding of a Library is one of the greatest things we can do with regard to results. It is one of the quietest of things; but there is nothing that I know of at bottom more important. Everyone able to read a good book becomes a wiser man. He becomes a similar centre of light and order, and just insight into the things around him. A collection of good books contains all the nobleness and wisdom of the world before us. Every heroic and victorious soul has left his stamp upon it. A collection of books is the best of all Universities; for the University only teaches us to read the book: you must go to the book itself for what it is. I call it a Church also—which every devout soul may enter—a Church but with no quarrelling, no Church-rates. . . .

At this point, Carlyle was interrupted by laughter and cheers, and sat down good-temperedly. His speech is too optimistic, in view of our present information; also too subjective in its emphasis on the "resonance" from books; also too little aware of the power of concentration possessed by many readers, which enables them to-day to continue through an air-raid. But it is a noble utterance; contrast it with a recent editorial utterance on the Eclipse of the Highbrow in the *Times*. It recalls us to the importance of seriousness, and to the preciousness and the destructability of knowledge. Knowledge will perish if we do not stand up for it, and testify. It is never safe, never harvested. It has to be protected not only against the gangster but against a much more charming and seductive foe: the crowd. "I know what I like and I know what I want," says the crowd, "and I don't want all these shelves and shelves of books. Scrap them."

The Library started in two rooms at 49 Pall Mall, with five hundred members, and three thousand books. Conditions were Spartan; no ink or paper was provided, and for a time there was no clock. In 1845 it moved into St. James's Square, and now it has a membership of four thousand, and about four hundred and seventy thousand books, together with various luxuries, including a comfortable reading-room. Its rise is largely due to a great librarian, Sir Charles Hagberg Wright, who died last year. Hagberg Wright had a European connection, and a European outlook. He was free from the insularity which has such a numbing effect on the collection of books, and it is largely thanks to him that one feels the library to be not English but civilised. For the moment it has one overwhelming problem before it: that of not getting smashed and not getting burnt. But if normality returns it will have the task of getting into touch with the thought and literature of the Continent, however repellent the mental state of the Continent may be. And—a more congenial task—it will have to get up to date on America. It has never admitted, and it must never admit, the idea of Exclusion; in Hagberg Wright's wise little pamphlet, "The Soul's Dispensary," there are some pertinent remarks on this, and a curious account of the war which he had to wage after the last war with various government departments before he could regain liberty for the reimportation of foreign literature.

E. M. FORSTER

THE PUBLIC ACADEMY

IN the crumbling world of no Eton and Harrow match, no Royal Ascot, no Cowes, the Academy has bravely upheld its tradition with a 173rd exhibition. True, there are only 1,079 pictures this year (over 150 by the Academicians), instead of the usual 1,550. But the overwhelming majority of the pictures are unmarked by the war. Landscapes, seascapes, homely scenes and portraits swamp the eye. There is a boom in flower-pieces, maybe because it's tricky work painting things out of doors nowadays; an "artist" is always practically a Fifth Columnist, anyway, to a policeman. But the war has left its mark, in producing a whole heap of vegetable Still Life, salads, cabbages, carrots.

Just two per cent. of all conversations recorded during the Private View were about the war or war news. People came to recapture a past, and some seemed to be struggling rather desperately to feel that these few hours were still the present. As an old lady remarked:

> "I come up every year from wherever I am in the country; it's sometimes 200 miles. I love art. Then I see people—artists—that I see only once a year. So many are lost—Llewellyn, Lavery, Dicksee. Some people you can replace, but men like that you can never replace. I hate modern art—so crude—the colour. I was at the Salon a few years ago when all that futurist art was on, and I had to come away; it gave me a pain—so crude."

For always, waiting round the corner, is the impact of the new and less pleasant—"I had the greatest difficulty getting a taxi, and the driver was most insulting."

Crowded together, in these dozen rooms, there is protection against the outside world. A sigh of infinite relief went up when, thank goodness, Lady Alexander with full coiffure, yellow brocade, sailed in solitary Edwardian composure down the long line of waiting pictures. Hardly anyone looking at the pictures, everyone looking for recognising smiles. The talk:

> "It's absolutely adorable."
> "It's altogether so intimate."
> "I don't hold any opinions about art."
> "It's the same old crowd, same old faces."
> "I'll look forward to a little argument with you in the library."
> "We hope many of the old gang will get together."
> "I can't understand what's happened to her."

But the threat is there. For instance, the new excuse:

> "Now when did I last see you—wasn't it when you had the car? It was ages ago, wasn't it?"
>
> "Is my hat all right, dear? I hit it on the roof of the bus."

While two ancient Academicians (the average age of R.A.s is over seventy) pathetically:

> "We must have a round of golf some time soon. I'll look forward to it."
>
> "I'm afraid my golfing days are over."

Golf, by the way, is the most popular hobby among R.A.s and A.R.A.s, with fishing second, sailing and gardening also ran, and ball games (other than billiards) nowhere. Less than a quarter were at Public Schools.

One of the most striking features at the Private View is the explicit and studious disownment of the slightest understanding of art. Even at the Royal Academy, art is something somehow advanced, Leftish, or too revealing. Many are very careful about this. The following conversation between two women sets the general tone:

> *First woman:* "I like some of these very much. I'd like to buy some. I don't understand art—that is not the painting actually—I like colour though. Do you paint?"
>
> *Second woman, with embarrassment:* "No, I'm afraid I don't. I *write*."
>
> *First woman:* "Well that's only a different form of art."

Recognising something in the picture matters at the public view› someone in the crowd at the private. We came across one unfortunate party who had forgotten the number of a picture (specially recommended to her for this reason) except that it ended in 1, and was done by a Mrs. Jennings. Maddeningly both 431 and 481 are by Alix Jennings, while 771 is by E. Owen Jennings. Pity the frustration of the young lady, therefore, when she says:

> "That's the Mrs. Jennings, 771. Mrs. F— was telling us about her. There's 431 and 481, but I'm sure she said *Mrs.* Jennings. *That* would be *Mr.*, wouldn't it? You see, it makes them real people, knowing people who know them. I believe 431 and 481 must be the one—perhaps Alix is a girl's name as well. How does she spell it? I don't think that other one's here."

It would be a salutary experience for everyone who generalises about the tastes and feelings of the British people to spend one whole day simply listening to people talking about pictures. The whole question of making a better Britain after the war seems somehow involved in the comment of a lady looking at Dod Proctor's 525 ("Teneriffe") and remarking:

> "That would be a nice one, but it's a cheaper frame."

Or this conversation between a young man and an elderly woman standing in front of 682 and 683 ("Rocks at Croyde," and "Blakeney, Norfolk"):

> *Old lady:* "Which one do you prefer?"
>
> *Young man:* "The bottom one (682)—of the two. Mind you, the top one's clever, but there's no colour—or at least no contrast—well, at any rate, it's uninteresting to look at. It's—well, finicky."
>
> *Old lady:* "I agree with you there. The bottom one's got some good colour, eh?"
>
> *Young man:* "It's bold, too. I mean—not exactly the picture—but the artist—who is it, Myles Tonks?—has been bold. He set out to capture something and he's got it. Strong but gentle, really."

And perhaps the most perfect expression of the recognition function in the Academy—the reassurance that art is something just like real life—came from the mother taking her public schoolboy son round the Exhibition.

> "Darling—your hair. You don't look as though you've combed it. There—isn't that a lovely picture? (4. 'Old Man's Beard'). Come on now, we'll never get round. Your hair! That's nice, isn't it? (9. 'Rubbish?'). Don't you wish you could paint like that? (19. 'Unfathomed depths from Welsh Mountains'). Anyway, isn't that where Ronald stayed? It's jolly good, *isn't* it?"

There's one other special reason for going to the Academy, anyhow for the Private View. To see the artists. The ordinary public hardly get a break here, for whereas, on private view day, 12 per cent. of all men counted had beards; on the first public view it was well under half per cent. Two per cent. of men had top hats at the private view. 25 per cent. of those at the private view were carrying gas-masks; those at the first public view were better citizens, 36 per cent. carrying them.

So much for the people. Now the pictures. Fairly detailed observation suggests that 360, the prize cauliflower picture, attracted most interest—it was the only comic picture in the show, and "good enough for *Punch*." The larger the picture, the more attention people paid to it. The three of the Queen (by the only old Etonian R.A.), looking rather as if she was made of pink icing sugar, attracted attention, but little enthusiasm. John's picture of the Earl of Athlone (164) was the subject of considerable unfavourable comment, quite a number of people being annoyed by it, as if they sensed some disrespect! The *Times* declared that the exhibition proved "there'll always be an England," adding carefully, "this is certainly not the moment to wish for any sort of change." But there is really nothing for them to worry about, except that there are only three nudes in the whole show (nearly fifty last year). Nearly a quarter of the total exhibits are portraits, the commonest type being Generals, who seem to have much more time to spare for being painted than Air Marshals, who have more time than Admirals; while of Cabinet Ministers only Major Attlee seems to have any time at all—and he is busily working at his desk.

Though the press have played up the war painting this year, there are almost exactly the same proportion of war references this year as last. Allowing the painters time for submitting, they had a clear seven months of air blitz; over half of them are Londoners. The result is half a dozen pictures of air-raid effects (e.g. 73, 436, 529, 590, 726), not one of them with any genuine feeling or fire, and eight pictures of the air war. The most absurd, though by no means untypical of the rest, is "Air-raid on a Convoy" (531), by Julius Olsson, R.A., "one of the greatest living masters of seascapes" (*Daily Express*). This picture shows five German planes being hit simultaneously by anti-aircraft fire, a circumstance all the more unusual in that there's a continuous line of flame from the ships to the planes, while at the same instant two other planes are just exploding as they hit the sea. Clearly many painters, particularly the R.A.s, recognise (rightly or wrongly) that they ought to be taking some notice of the war, but find it very difficult to do so. The war has three annoying characteristics from the painter's point of view: (1) a lot of the visually exciting parts of it don't stay still for long at a time, (2) a lot of it has to do with machines, which don't quite fit into the orthodoxy of paint and the square canvas, and (3) a lot of things happen at night, and the chaps simply haven't been trained to paint the night.

In this real R.A. world, one picture contains a tank; none a private car, but in the most dramatic illustration of all, Pitchforth's "Road Transport" (78), lorries driving in the darkness on a by-pass, and a phantastic rabbit irrelevantly lolloping across the foreground. No one should miss the Academy this year. It is a historic occasion, in the strict sense. For it reconstructs the past—much of it pre-Industrial Revolution.

TOM HARRISSON AND HUMPHREY PEASE

PLAYS AND PICTURES

Authentic Bach

We owe the Circle of International Art a warm debt of gratitude for their enterprise in performing for the first time in London two of Bach's violin Sonatas (G major and B minor) for the first time as he wrote them—that is to say, to an accompaniment of the harpsichord and viola da gamba. They formed an ideal combination with Trude Huttenbach as violinist, Otto Huttenbach with his bass viol and Daphne Blackwall at the harpsichord. These Sonatas do not rank among the most inspired of Bach's compositions, but the rare chance of hearing them admirably played in this form was none the less welcome. One doubts, however, whether we can ever hear what Bach's contemporaries heard. A bass viol for our ears is first of all an archaic 'cello; a harpsichord is something that differs from a modern piano. We listen to the three wondering whether Bach will evolve anything of the independent movement we expect from a trio, and we are disappointed, as his first audience was not, when he fails to do it. But to a musician with an instinct for history this concert offered an hour as precious as it was unusual.

L.P.O. Summer Concerts

For one reason and another there is a shortage of conductors in London this summer. The first of the London Philharmonic Orchestra's Summer Concerts last Sunday at Queen's Hall was conducted by Mr. Leslie Heward, well known to listeners for some time as a musician of taste and energy. The programme on Sunday had been arranged with rather less than his usual skill. Brahms's Tragic Overture and Sibelius' *The Swan of Tuonela*, both well played, were followed by Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, which provided the necessary contrast, but with a brilliance (helped by Mr. Cyril Smith's playing of the piano) that lapsed into brilliantine. This showy and chromatic work ought to be left to the ends of programmes, where it could not tire the ear for better things. In the circumstances Beethoven's Sixth Symphony, coming after, made a rather flat impression which was the fault neither of the music nor of its performance. The arrangement of the concert on Thursday evening at the Central Hall, Archway, was far more satisfactory: *Carnaval Romain*, *Symphony No. 6*, *Swan of Tuonela* and *Enigma Variations*.

"Living in Cities"

The exhibition under the above title, shown last week at the R.I.B.A., beautifully presented though it is, is disappointingly inconclusive. Being sponsored by a semi-official body, it was presumably a matter of policy that it should avoid raising controversial issues, but a propaganda exhibition which sets out to display the charms of a well-planned city with special reference to the opportunities post-war reconstruction will present, yet fails to mention that the biggest problem is not the formulation of the right architectural principles, but, for example, control of the land and of the location of industry, cannot escape a charge of Utopianism. Its inconclusiveness apart, however, it is full of ideas, and should serve one useful purpose in making clear to the Man in the Street that the beastly cities in which he finds himself engulfed are man-made, not acts of God. He so commonly takes a fatalistic attitude to architectural inefficiency, accepting such things as bus queues, burst water-pipes, the destruction of beauty for the sake of expediency, and urban ugliness generally, much as he accepts the weather; but an exhibition that indicates some of the remarkable resources of modern science and sets these beside a simple statement of the human needs it is the city's job to fulfil, shows him how he has been cheated by his own civilisation and that there are alternatives to escaping from the insufferable city into the country and spoiling that in its turn. The exhibition is a portable one, consisting of photographs and diagrams arranged with short explanatory titles on a series of screens. The historical section, with which it begins, is particularly well displayed, being a lucid pictorial summary of the growth of towns, relating each kind to the society that produced it and vividly contrasting the organic structure of a cathedral or market town and the self-imposed order of a town like Bath with the chaos that has reigned since purpose and control were lost. A notable virtue of the part which deals with rebuilding is its insistence that the best of the past is part of the raw material of reconstruction. It is a relief to be spared that tiresome but familiar dream world of concrete and glass, and have it acknowledged, for instance, that even with the most up-to-date resources it would be difficult to improve on the Temple as a model of a professional or residential quarter in a busy town. The Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts, the British Institute of Adult Education and the 1940 Council, all have a hand in the organisation and circulation of this useful and stimulating exhibition, of which three copies will tour the provinces.

"Kitty Foyle," at the Gaumont
"City for Conquest," at Warner's

This is a week for Academies. From Burlington House to the Hollywood Academy of Something or Other and Motion Pictures Art is not so far a step as might be supposed. *Kitty Foyle* bears the stamp of having paraded before committee eyes. True, it was not the picture itself that was hung, but Miss Ginger Rogers' performance in it. She gave recently a better performance in a much better film; *Primrose Path*, however, was not an Academy sort of picture. *Kitty Foyle* is. Everyone has read the novelette of the girl who is married by an aristocrat who won't show her in society; he keeps on leaving her and keeps on coming back; and she has a steady man of her own class who wants to marry her, too, but she's in love with the other, and it's a long and a warm and a hard-soft story, till the end, when everything is soft and warm. That is the frame for Miss Rogers' performance; it comes from a novel by Christopher Morley which lovers of the excruciating might find enjoyable. Ginger Rogers (to earn her award) has to begin in Edwardian flounces, has to talk to herself in a mirror, has to exclaim "Judas Priest!" as her father did, has to flash back to her schooldays and have a baby, which of course dies; all of which she does with varied and enchanting skill. To like the film you have to fall in love with Miss Rogers, which isn't difficult. If you are not prepared to do that, then *Kitty Foyle* is just another over-long, over-fragrant Academy piece like *Rebecca* and *Gone With the Wind*.

It is so long since James Cagney appeared in a good film that one wonders what has happened to the tough school. After gangsters—what? *City for Conquest* is about big boxing and preferring a quiet life (James Cagney), and being ambitious and wizard with your feet (Ann Sheridan). The local colour of prize-fights and dance contests is up to standard; so, too, are Cagney and Sheridan in their roles. But the etceteras! A sermonising tramp broods over the spectacle of New York streets; Cagney has a kid brother (with all that a kid brother means in Hollywood); the kid brother is always composing a New York symphony on the piano; and at the end there is a slap-up performance of the symphony in a concert-hall. We have to hear it out from beginning to end; mercifully, it is unorthodox in possessing only one movement. There was a time when kid brothers would have had to be content with two minutes on the violin.

THE COMING WEEK

Saturday, May 10th—
Miss R. Kitainik: "The Arts in the U.S.S.R.—Literature," 9 Fitzroy Square, W.1, 2.30.
Students of Morley Theatre School present "The Importance of Being Earnest," Tavistock Little Theatre, 2.30.
Public Meeting to celebrate Ethiopia's Victories and Freedom. Livingstone Hall, 2.30.

Sunday, May 11th—
C. E. M. Joad: "Education in the New World," Conway Hall, 11.
Concert of Works by Refugee Composers, 36 Upper Park Road, N.W.3, 7.
The London Philharmonic Orchestra, Queen's Hall, 2.30.

Monday, May 12th—
Fabian International Affairs Group Snack Lunch. O. Pollak: "The Future of Austria," 12 Gt. Newport St., W.C.2, 1.

Tuesday, May 13th—
E. F. M. Durbin: "The British Economic System," Morley College, 7.

Thursday, May 15th—
Dr. Rudolf Wittkower: "The Louvre in the 17th Century," Courtauld Inst., 1.15.
E. F. M. Durbin: "Rebuilding of British Industry," Morley College, 6.30.

Friday, May 16th—
Dr. Georg Knepler: "Music and Education," 36 Upper Park Road, N.W.3, 5.15.
Sebastian Haffner: "Germany and Peace," Federal Union, 44 Gordon Square, W.C.1.

Correspondence

INDIA

Sir,—In last week's issue of The New Statesman and Nation, Dr. Edward Thompson appealed for the publication of Nehru's speech from the dock at his recent trial. The publication of the full text of the speech is perhaps not possible in these days of paper rationing. But may I ask for a few inches of your space to quote at least one paragraph from it in which Nehru explains the significance of the present Indian struggle? Addressing the magistrate Nehru said:

> I stand before you, Sir, as an individual being tried for certain offences against the State. You are a symbol of that State. But I am also something more than an individual—I, too, am a symbol at the present moment, a symbol of Indian nationalism, resolved to break away from the British Empire and achieve the independence of India. It is not me that you are seeking to judge and condemn, but rather the hundreds of millions of the people of India, and that is a large task even for a proud Empire. Perhaps it may be that, though I am standing before you on my trial, it is the British Empire itself that is on trial before the bar of the world. There are more powerful forces at work in the world to-day than courts of law: there are elemental urges for freedom and food and security which are moving vast masses of people, and history is being moulded by them. . . . It is a small matter what happens to me in this trial or subsequently. Individuals count for little: they come and go, as I shall go when my time is up. Seven times I have been tried and convicted by British authorities in India and many years of my life lie buried within prison walls. An eighth or ninth time, and a few more years, make little difference. But it is no small matter what happens to India and her millions of sons and daughters. That is the issue before me, and that is ultimately the issue before you. If the British Government imagines that it can continue to exploit them and play about with them against their will, as it has done in the past, then it is grievously mistaken. It has misjudged their present temper and read history in vain. . . .

These moving passages are quoted not with a view to arousing the sympathy of the humanitarians in this country for Nehru and other political prisoners in India, but so that people in Britain may be able to realise fully the implications of the policy their Government is pursuing in India to-day.

Jesus College, D. M. Anand
Oxford.

[Nehru's defence is reproduced in a recently published volume of his speeches and articles, *The Unity of India* (Lindsay Drummond, 12s. 6d.).—Ed. *N. S. & N.*]

SIR,—"Yet I believe," said Edward Thompson in your last issue, "that even now it would be possible to win Congress over to co-operation if the case for co-operation and for trusting our own people were rightly presented."

I do not know how Mr. Thompson would present our case to India at this point. If he thinks a "definite date for Dominion Status and the entrusting of the key portfolios of Defence and Finance to Indians of some representative quality" would do the trick, then he is sadly mistaken. The only people we could win over would be the opportunist Moderates like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, whose shift of allegiance would by no means lessen what the *Times* calls "the state of political ferment for which no parallel can be found since the Civil Disobedience movement of 10 years ago."

There is, I have found, a persistent refusal in England to acknowledge the facts of our Indian policy. I was in India for the first year of the war, and could see how logically and remorselessly repression developed, from the militant Communists in the first few months of the war, to the Peasant leaders after that, and, after the fall of France, to the anti-war speakers of every political complexion. The sentence on Jawarharlal Nehru, which, I gather, came as a great shock to Liberal England, was only the expected next step in India. A month before it happened (before the campaign of "limited Civil Disobedience" had been announced), a Police Officer in the U.P. assured me his arrest had been decided upon. I spoke to Nehru on the night before he was arrested, and I can promise Mr. Thompson that he had given up all hope of the sort of co-operation that Mr. Thompson appears still to envisage.

Given these premises, that our Indian policy is not the product of vague stupidity, but a calculated stalemate prolonged until the "new leaders" can be introduced and a new Constitution, not based on "majority rule," can be thought up, what should be the conclusion? Not, surely, that proposals for compromise with the Moderates at this stage would prove our cause to be "the tremendous thing for all mankind that it is"; rather, that our cause is already proved, under its present leaders, entirely reactionary in the one country where its "revolutionary" quality can be tested.

Herstmonceux, Sussex. A. J. ALEXANDER

"FULL CIRCLE"

SIR,—I feel a sense of disturbance in reading anything by Mr. Joad. I know that if he can make out a good case in favour of a proposition, he can also make out an equally good case against it. His argument that there is no ethical compulsion behind Marxian teaching makes it difficult to take him seriously. Has he ever heard Pollitt at Communist meetings? Has he ever witnessed the tremendous feelings of moral protest against social injustice and the expressions of faith in a new world based on human brotherhood at these meetings?

As for his statement that Communists would not object to Capitalism if only they shared a little more of its spoils, the point seems so cheap that one can only assume that he forgot for a moment that he was writing for THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, and not for *Tit-Bits* or *Answers*.

Presumably the correct thing now is to try again and love your enemies. Love Hitler? Love those whose policy in the past had always been one of accommodation with him on the assumption that he would attack the U.S.S.R. and continue his good work of destroying the working-class movements of Europe? Love those who even while our world is cracking to bits are making piles of money in the process?

We live in days when we must choose between black and red. The in-between political shades no longer effectively exist, and Mr. Joad will soon be compelled to make his choice instead of mentally sitting in his philosophical armchairs, which have no relationships to the bloody realities which have now become our world. The Fascist wheel will not turn Liberal circle. J. GINNER

SIR,—In the interests of historical accuracy, Professor Joad must not be allowed to "get away" with the statement that the disappearance or reappearance of such evils as torture, duelling, persecution for witchcraft, etc., has anything to do with Christianity. The thousand years or so during which the position of Christianity in Europe was unchallenged were, as a matter of fact, a time during which torture was in regular use, trial by combat officially recognised, and the reality of witchcraft unquestioned. Their disappearance, so far as they disappeared, was due to the "godless" eighteenth century: Voltaire, Rousseau and Tom Paine had more to do with it than Christ.

Pace Professor Joad, the generation to which he and I belong were not "brought up to understand" Socialism, but to misunderstand it. I put it to him that we became Socialists in spite of our Christian bringing up, and in proportion as we revolted against it and fell for the French Revolution, Shelley, Shaw, and Marx. We made the mistake, natural to intellectuals, of thinking that our newly discovered truth would become evident to the majority if we went on proclaiming it long enough. We found out by bitter experience that the beliefs of the majority are conditioned, not by reason, but by the interests of the class who have economic power and the control of press and radio. As a natural result we now pay more attention than we did to the means of winning power. That does not mean that we have forgotten Voltaire, Rousseau, Paine, Shelley and Shaw. It means that we have taken to heart the lesson taught by Shaw himself in *Major Barbara*:

> "Ought, ought, ought, ought, ought! Are you going to spend your life saying ought, like the rest of our moralists? Turn your oughts into shalls, man. Come and make explosives with me."

The French and Russian revolutionists knew it. We had to learn it. Professor Joad has not refuted it. ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON

5 Frenchay Road, Oxford.

SIR,—The wheel comes full circle, indeed. For many of those Socialists, among whom was Professor Joad, who repudiated the doctrine that the end sanctifies the means are now finding in the preservation of our present democracy a sufficient sanctification of the brutal means of war. The slaughter of the civil population inevitable on both sides is apparently a means from which they do not shrink.

Isn't it dangerously akin to cant to stress the need for love and respect for the individual and, at the same time, to support the means of war which inevitably override considerations of love and convert the individual into a cog of the war-machine? Support the war-effort by all means if you consider it necessary to defeat Hitlerism. But, for goodness' sake, no hypocrisy. Communists, at least, are honest in their justification of the means they deem necessary for their ends, and to that extent their ethical standard is higher than yours.

7 Rayleigh Close, R. OSBORN
Palmers Green,
London, N.13.

SIR,—I agree with Prof. Joad's interesting conclusion that a synthesis of love and power is necessary. Apparently Hardy and Tolstoi in their greatest novels also agreed, at least unconsciously. But to obtain this synthesis—if ever—objectively in politics, it is first necessary to attain it subjectively. In other words, you can't have the policy until you have the men who can carry it through. How to get them? On this aspect Prof. Joad is significantly silent. I have come across only two direct approaches to it, viz. (*a*) D. H. Lawrence's neglected essays, *The Study of Thomas Hardy* and *The Crown*; (*b*) the Chinese Zen Masters, whom I am sure people would find fascinating and more down to earth than Plato or Aristotle. Prof. Suzuki's works are the best introduction to them. K. H. PRIDE

234 Cavendish Road, S.W.12.

THE PROBLEM OF GERMANY

SIR,—My attention has just been called to certain remarks which Mr. Kingsley Martin has made about myself in an article entitled "The Problem of Germany," which appeared in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION on March 22nd. These remarks are not worth refuting, for they neither make an argument nor state a case. But they call for comment because they cannot fail to convey a very false impression if their dishonourable and untruthful character is not pointed out.

My editorship of the *Nineteenth Century and After* is anonymous. Mr. Kingsley Martin should have referred to me as the Editor of that journal, and not by name. This is, perhaps, a matter of professional etiquette, rather than of honour. Much graver—and certainly a departure from the code of professional honour—is Mr. Kingsley Martin's indiscretion in stating that I was on the staff of a well-known newspaper, both as a correspondent abroad and as a leader-writer. Leader-writing, in particular, is strictly anonymous on all the reputable dailies, chiefly because the leading article conveys not the opinions of this or that member of the staff, but the policy of the paper. It might be pertinent to ask how Mr. Kingsley Martin knows that this or that leading article was by myself. With regard to messages he alleges I sent from Berlin, how, one might ask, does he know that they were mine? Is he sure that this or that message was not done by some other person, perhaps by a deputy while I was elsewhere? If he has not this knowledge, then his veracity is in doubt. If he has this knowledge, he is guilty of a breach of confidence, for the knowledge could only be inside knowledge—and therefore not his own to give away.

What makes Mr. Kingsley Martin's conduct all the more dishonourable is that he has used what is, or purports to be, inside information, to convey a maliciously untruthful impression of my own political attitude. He alleges that in the past I said this or that (the past dating back as far as 1923), whereas to-day, so he alleges, I say something quite different. This would not, in itself, be a serious charge, because it could be brought against anyone. But Mr. Kingsley Martin, without producing any evidence, and relying on his memory, lifts what I may have said out of its context and often distorts it in addition. If he had mentioned other things I really did say, his picture of my attitude would be nearer the truth, but as this would not suit his crooked purpose he prefers to refrain from mentioning them.

I have, it is true, held opinions resembling some of those which Mr. Kingsley Martin reproduces in a distorted form. I stand by some of them still. Others I recognise as mistaken. I shall not imitate Mr. Kingsley Martin's conduct and use inside knowledge to refute him point by point. I shall confine myself to the flat contradiction of two of his items by way of example, relying on the evidence of my own memory, which, with regard to these two items, is vivid and, I think, accurate.

He says he "well remembers" the "admiration I felt for the German Communists in contrast to the effete leaders of German Social Democracy." I had a very poor opinion of the German Communists as a whole, though I did admire the courage with which a few—friends of mine amongst them—did oppose the National Socialist despotism. As for the "effete leaders of German Social Democracy," I was certainly critical of them, as, I believe, most objective observers were. I was in close personal contact with many of them. Two of them—those who were recently handed over to the Germans by order of the Vichy Government—were old and intimate friends of mine, and have never ceased to be. Their situation—and that of the other leaders of Social Democracy—was tragic in a far deeper sense than Mr. Kingsley Martin seems able to comprehend. Unfavourable as the view was I felt compelled to take with regard to the German Social Democrats as a whole, it was so much less unfavourable than the view taken by most observers that I constantly found myself warning fellow observers against upsetting the German Government. To pronounce a summary verdict on my attitude and to declare that I regarded men, amongst them many (yes, many) whom I still revere, as "effete" is an impudent falsehood.

Mr. Kingsley Martin declares that I wrote "with humanitarian passion about the heroic resistance to the Nazis displayed by the Communists and the Protestant Churches." I well remember that I often said at the time (I am sure I wrote nothing different) namely that the Communists went over to the National Socialists by thousands, that the rank and file of the National Socialists were largely recruited from the rank and file of the Communists, that those regions which had been deepest "red" in Germany went deepest "brown," and that only a small minority offered "heroic resistance." As for the Protestant Churches, I certainly never wrote about them with a "humanitarian passion" I did not feel—the issue was not "humanitarian" at all; it was not even political, but theological. Nor is it true that "the Protestant Churches" offered resistance—it was only the "Confessional" clergy and their followers who, amongst German Protestants, offered resistance.

I do not mention these items to show that I was right, but to expose Mr. Kingsley Martin's method of misrepresentation. Whether I was right or wrong in this or that respect can be of little interest to your readers.

In any case, my views of the international situation in general and the German situation in par-

ticular over a period of some four years—a long time, nowadays—are on record under my own name. To misrepresent them, no violation of the code of professional honour is needed. They will be found in my book *Unto Caesar*, which was begun more than three years, and published six months, before the war. It was republished during the war. I do not claim to have been more often right or more often wrong than most other observers, but the perusal of my book (which Mr. Kingsley Martin reviewed and may even have read) will satisfy any fair-minded person that Mr. Kingsley Martin's article is a gross and malicious misrepresentation.
F. A. VOIGT

17 John Street
Bedford Row, W.C.1.

[Mr. Kingsley Martin writes: This is all fiddle-faddle. The fact that Mr. Voigt is Editor of the *Nineteenth Century* is no guilty secret, and his long and distinguished connection with the *Manchester Guardian* is public property. I gave away no private information, nor did I commit the sin of confusing an editorial with a personal opinion. Mr. Voigt's opinions were, in fact, well known amongst a large number of persons, and he was influential then as he is to-day. It was from Mr. Voigt more than from anyone else that I learnt to believe in the "other Germany." On the two points on which Mr. Voigt says that he is exposing my misleading representations, he does nothing more than confirm them by adding some interesting details; the only significance of his letter lies in its use of the old device of abusing plaintiff's attorney to cover an evasion of the point of substance in my article. Mr. Voigt says there is no argument to answer. The argument is very clear and the issue very important. Mr. Voigt vehemently attacks all those who suggest that there may in the future be friendship between the mass of German people and ourselves. He outlines a peace very similar to that which France imposed and Mr. Voigt opposed after the last war. I suggest to him that the grounds he had for opposing that settlement would still be followed after this war, and ask him to consider whether the true solution of this appallingly difficult problem does not lie in common economic institutions for Europe after the Nazi regime has passed away.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

WAR DISABILITY

SIR,—Every ex-Service man deprived of pension rights will be gratified by the publicity given this week by your Economic Correspondent to the need for a general principle on war disabilities.

It is only too true that men who are passed for the Army in A or B grades, and who are discharged subsequently on medical grounds, have the greatest difficulty in securing fair consideration from the Ministry of Pensions.

I was called up with the 20's in December, 1939, as B2, for the Royal Army Service Corps. In January, 1940, thanks largely to lack of proper medical attention at my unit, I contracted bronchial pneumonia and sub-acute appendicitis, and was admitted to an Essex military hospital, where I remained altogether some three months.

At the close of this period I was recommended for discharge and sent on sick leave. Later, I was told that the A.D.M.S. had declined to endorse the specialists' recommendation, and I was returned to my unit in Category D, with instructions to attend a further Medical Board after three months. When, in due course, I did so, I was re-graded B1, and marked as fit for all military duties.

Eventually, after passing through successive military hospitals with colitis, a long history of fainting fits, and nervous shock following enemy air raids—the latter including temporary loss of vision and partial amnesia—I was sent to a special neuropathic hospital in Somerset, and from there finally left the Army—thirteen months after enlistment—as psychoneurotic and totally unfit for military service.

Like Mr. Griffiths' constituent, I have been refused a pension on the grounds that my disability was not caused by my service in the Army, nor materially aggravated by it.

The sophistry of this argument is self-evident. I was classed B2 when I entered the Army. Were I still B2 I should presumably still be with the Army. But I am officially classed as Grade E and permanently exempt from service. Hence it is apparent that the deterioration in my health must have occurred during my period with the Colours. Of course, perhaps I was not *really* fit in the first place, but the responsibility of the State in that event is surely greater rather than less.

I am more fortunate than Mr. Griffiths' constituent inasmuch as I have been able to resume professional work, and am not in financial distress through lack of a pension. The relevant fact is, however, that the present system of apportioning pensions is callous, grossly unfair, and in urgent need of revision.
ANTHONY PHILIP KIELY

19 Harrow View,
Harrow-on-the-Hill.

TOTALITARIAN METHODS

SIR,—There is a growing realisation of the danger that, in trying to defeat Nazism, we may adopt totalitarian methods. The following incident throws an important light on this question.

Six weeks ago a Bristolian, whom I have known for a number of years, came to tell me that he had been asked by our Chief Constable to resign from the Air Raid Wardens' Organisation, and had been told that if he did not resign he would be dismissed. No reason was given for his dismissal.

As he had been a Warden (part time) since the beginning of the war and had always performed his duties to the satisfaction of the Post Wardens, under whom he had served, he refused to resign and asked for an explanation. The Chief Constable replied by giving him notice to terminate his appointment on April 2nd and instructing him to hand in his equipment by that date.

I am a member of the Bristol A.R.P. Committee, so I felt it appropriate that I should enquire into the case. I was informed, to my surprise, that the dismissal of a Warden was not a matter which would be referred or reported to the A.R.P. Committee, but that it would be dealt with by the police officials, apparently without any right of appeal.

This information disturbed me, for I have always considered it a fundamental principle of local government in England that officials do not take important decisions without reference to some appropriate committee. I was also disturbed by the fact that a letter of protest signed by the other Wardens of the dismissed Warden's Post, addressed to the Chairman of the A.R.P. Committee and forwarded through the Wardens' Organisation via the Chief Constable took from March 26th to April 10th to reach its destination and was therefore not mentioned at the meeting of the full A.R.P. Committee on April 4th or at the city council meeting on April 8th, on both of which occasions the dismissal was discussed. In fact this letter was only produced after a further protest from 80 fire watchers in the Post area had been presented at the council meeting of the 8th and referred to the A.R.P. Committee by the council.

On April 25th a deputation waited on the A.R.P. General Purposes Sub-committee with a further protest signed by over 600 residents in the Post area. As a result the chairman of the General Purposes Sub-committee and the chairman of the A.R.P. Committee were requested to interview the Chief Constable and intimate to him that it was unfortunate in the Sub-committee's view that he would give the Warden concerned no reason for his dismissal.

At a further meeting of the A.R.P. Committee we received a report of this interview. It appears that the Chief Constable produced a letter from the Ministry of Home Security, authorising the "local authority" to dismiss a Warden in certain circumstances, without intimating any reason for his dismissal. The point which arises is: What does the Ministry of Home Security understand by the "local authority"? Does it understand this phrase to mean the Chief Constable and the local police, or does it mean the elected representatives?

It is possible that the phrase might convey the former meaning to an ex-civil servant, like Sir John Anderson, who was presumably responsible for the letter in question. One hopes, however, that Mr. Herbert Morrison will interpret the phrase to mean the elected representatives. In any case it is high time the point was cleared up.

Meanwhile the Chief Constable has intimated his willingness to interview the Warden he has dismissed and convey to him verbally the reason for his removal. If he cannot convince the Warden of the justice of his dismissal, the latter will presumably have to appeal to the A.R.P. Committee or to the Minister to have his case reviewed.
R. ST. JOHN READE

4 Goldney Avenue, Bristol.

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

THE English have no time to think of happiness just now. How best to attain it, and having attained, to keep it: these are themes which war automatically obliterates, along with "unnecessary" luxuries and as if they were among them. In holes and corners—behind the bars of canteens, in unusual recesses of underground shelters, in messrooms and sleeping quarters, on solitary watches, and in the plagal cadence of physical love or of receding pain—individual men and women no doubt still spin for themselves brief cocoons of solitude in which happiness flowers out of memory, like a perfect concord sweetly struck and held. And for most there is the simpler ecstasy of togetherness in the present; but that, like a drug, suffers from the law of diminishing returns. So that while endurance and suffering and anxieties continue to be the norm of existence, happiness must be content to lie in state in all our hearts. But directly the war is over it will return to life and again force itself on our attention.

Happiness has never, so far as I know, been taken as the overt theme of a novel by any except that exquisite writer, Jacques Chardonne, who, by placing a seismograph in the inmost chamber of married life, has plotted most subtly and poignantly the domestic graph. But if this writer admits that *le bonheur* constitutes his fundamental theme, *Romanesques* is nevertheless only the most recent of a long series of novels more implicitly devoted to the subject. *La Nouvelle Héloïse, Werther, Adolphe, Obermann, A Hero of Our Time, Eugene Onyegin, Le Lys dans la Vallée, Dominique, Der Nachsommer, Niels Lyhne, Le Grand Meaulnes, The Waves;* the list is not exhaustive, but I hope contains the chief titles—enough at any rate to indicate a common quality, which I believe to be necessary to the theme I have mentioned: the quality of elegiac poetry. It is a quality exemplified supremely in the history of English verse; but our great novelists have for the most part preferred an oblique approach, by way of relations that are generally considered less dispensable; so that my list contains only one English novel, and that—significantly—by a woman of genius by the loss of whom we have recently become the poorer. *The Waves* is one of the most astonishing feats of sustained imaginative writing in the language, and also perhaps the most purely beautiful of English novels; but, my subject being Happiness, I find this more clearly and dramatically treated in another novel on my list: Eugène Fromentin's *Dominique.*

This civilised masterpiece, which appeared in the 1860's, tells the story (in the first person, except in the important prelude and epilogue) of a vine-grower of South-West France, Dominique de Bray. There are only five other characters of importance: Olivier d'Orsel, the neighbour and friend of Dominique's youth; Augustin, Dominique's tutor; Olivier's two young cousins, Madeleine and Julie; and M. de Nièvres, whom Madeleine marries. The plot is superficially simple and concerns Dominique's unhappy passion for Madeleine, her endeavour to "be a sister to him," her failure and lapse into emotion stronger even than that which she has aroused, the preservation of her moral integrity, her separation—at last absolute—from Dominique, and the latter's marriage to another woman, with whom he finds the happiness that comes to those who have the strength to persist in the path of reality.

A dull, conventional, outmoded story? To Fromentin, who was a painter of some distinction and knew just how important the actual subject of a picture was, what mattered was, not his plot, but his theme and the application to it of his general design; and in his choice of characters appears his consummate artistry. To be happy requires intelligence—of the heart, if not of the head—and all Fromentin's people except one are represented as accepting the major premise of living: to embrace the implications of a rather bad job. The author makes no exorbitant claims for his characters' keeping this hard truth always in sight; yet consistency is part of his ordered, nineteenth century point of view, and this makes it necessary for him to include at least one prize botcher—one whose extravagant demands on life continue long after the obvious answer has been made to his pretensions. The essential difference between an intelligent man and a merely clever one is that the latter nearly always lacks a sense of proportion. Dominique's sense of romance is a strong and beautiful emotion, but it yields at length before the dilemma of life or death; whereas in Olivier d'Orsel we are shown the bitter fate of those who let the daffodils of youth wither and stink in the vase. For Olivier is the nineteenth-century Byronic man, who at once attracts and repels Dominique.

> Je le voyais toujours aussi calme, libre d'esprit, prompt à tout, avec son aimable visage aux accents un peu froids, ses yeux impertinents pour tous ceux qui n'étaient pas ses amis, et ce sourire rapide et très séduisant dont il savait faire avec tant d'àpropos tantôt une caresse et tantôt une arme.

This is the kind of man who would rather offend than make no impression at all; who plumps for facility in human relationships ("J'aime les choses qui se décident promptement et se dénouent de même"); and whose final words to his friend —"Try to be happy"—reveal the measure of his own failure in that respect. This self-centred, violent character is a stranger to the nobility that is willing to sacrifice itself for something unworthy of it; his opposite number in the scheme of the novel is, not Dominique himself, but Augustin—the poor, dour, painfully priggish tutor, who matches the unattractiveness of poverty with a strength and beauty of soul which render that disadvantage unimportant. "Il ne sentait pas tout, mais il n'y avait rien qu'il ne comprît." It is notoriously difficult to make goodness appear interesting, as Edmund Spenser and other great writers have found to their cost; but Augustin is a triumph for his creator. A Jansenist character, Augustin's poignant interest lies in his profound resemblance to Madeleine. By the very disparity of their lives and the different conflict each is called upon to resolve, these two complete one another, as a pedestal completes and sets off a bust. Together they form a portrait of what is most truly distinguished in human beings, and the clue to their association in the author's mind lies, I think, in the conversation halfway through the book, in which Augustin says: "La question n'est pas de savoir si l'on est heureux, mais de savoir si l'on a tout fait pour de devenir." A little later Madeleine passes this on to Dominique in a form characteristic of her own more diffident nature: "Qui sait même si le bonheur n'est pas en grande partie dans la volonté d'être heureux?"

Considered together in this way, Madeleine and Augustin rise superior to Dominique, who is *l'homme moyen sensuel* of this extremely realistic book. Like many such, he is mildly romantic in youth, makes imaginary journeys on a map and writes poems of which he is somewhat ashamed (Fromentin is careful to let us know how bad they were). He too is conscious of "the need of being happy"; but, being an average man, he has the average man's destiny, and that includes at least one struggle in which the life of the heart is in peril. He wins and so does Madeleine; but in so far as her nature is of finer grain than his, the scar on it will have been more cruel. And since tragedy must have its part in this most heartening book, the author gives it us first in the full orchestra of Dominique's despair. The feeling of being unhappily in love has never, I think, been better or more fully communicated; the exact statements of Fromentin's classical prose make Proust's redundant interpretations seem horribly ornate and special. But, to pursue my simile, a more piercing theme is buried in the depths of the polyphony. One of the worst features of male romanticism is its inability to leave matters in a delicate balance; the youthful Dominique, though paying lip-service to reason, belongs to the all-or-nothing school. Madeleine's effort to keep the scales evenly balanced over four heads (her sister Julie is involved, through her unheeded love for Olivier) ends by upsetting her own; thus the tragedy lies less in Dominique's loss than in the crucial breakdown of Madeleine's character under the self-imposed strain. The lily begins to fester, and perceiving it, she gives vent to her bitterest thought in describing Olivier, of whose temperament she is perfectly aware, as "the happiest of all." Here we reach the lowest point of fortune which Fromentin's scheme allows us to touch—the point at which Dominique understands at last that "every littleness of character is the result of a flaw in one's happiness." The French phrase—*un défaut de bonheur*—is untranslatably exact, for the word *bonheur* contains by derivation the combined notions of luck and of the temperament which creates its own happiness by showing that it is on good terms with itself.

To a greater extent than Dominique, Madeleine is the victim of circumstances which required of women a stronger rectitude and a more rigid sense of self-respect than men were expected to display. Her success, therefore, is the equal of that of a kindred but much more famous heroine: Balzac's Mme. de Mortsauf, who nevertheless died in achieving her aim. And Madeleine, in her last words to her lover before they separate for ever, shows her perfect realisation of the issues. "Marry," she says, "——later on, when you feel inclined. And do not imagine that your wife could be jealous of me, for at that moment I shall be either dead or else happy. . . ." It is to be presumed that she had no need to die, for her husband was no M. de Mortsauf; indeed the Comte de Nièvres is the perfect French husband—dignified, reasonable, kind. To have given Madeleine cause of complaint in this sphere would have been to ruin the story as it stands, and Fromentin has again drawn an admirably distinct portrait of the kind of man—a little stiff, a little cold—whose character commands the highest respect in his wife but leaves a dangerous amount of room in her heart.

Such is the human structure of an astoundingly faultless novel. The setting, style and tempo decorate and exhibit that structure with admirable propriety. I have suggested that Fromentin's knowledge and practice of painting influenced his narrative style. The habit of looking intently at objects and the wholes they compose give his prose the unified fluency of a successful painting, in which line and colour and texture all contribute to an effect of delightful vividness and easy mastery of the exactly right touch. And in many small, discreet visions the painter's eye is obvious:

> . . . dans les endroits plus ouverts au vent, des troupes d'enfants lançaient des cerfs-volants à longues banderoles frissonnantes, et les regardaient à perte de vue, fixés dans le clair azur comme des écussons blancs, ponctués de couleurs vives.

But it is in the large Courbetesque landscapes of the opening chapters; in the miraculously beautiful intermezzo, which cuts the central, Paris section into two halves, and which describes late summer days in the vineyards and on a boat at sea—a passage that fills the mind with tranquillity and a sense of absolute, static happiness: it is in these extended impressions that Fromentin combines the eye of the painter with the ear of the poet, is at once Turgenev's equal and the forerunner of Virginia Woolf in *To the Lighthouse.*

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Dodd was U.S. Ambassador to Germany, 1933-1938: this is the private diary he kept during his mission

" A whispering campaign against its accuracy was attempted in London, and I have been at some pains to hunt down and dispose of these detractions whenever they took a definite form. It is one of the frankest and most clear-headed accounts we are ever likely to have of the European drama during the past seven years. His outspoken comments on the Fascist sympathies of many upper-class British people are extremely illuminating "—*H. G. Wells*

" There can be no sort of doubt that it is certain to be one of the indispensable documents for the future historian of our time. . . . A lifting of the veil by one whose training and insight fitted him to understand the forces in play. . . . There is not a redeeming feature in these pages about the Nazi rulers. It is clear that they planned for war; it is clear that they wanted war. . . . No Englishman emerges with credit from these pages. Our first Ambassador, Sir Eric Phipps, is aloof; the attitude of Sir Nevile Henderson has been defined in his own book. Lord Lothian, whatever he may have done later to retrieve his reputation, is, in these entries, the ardent friend of the Hitler system. . . . It is the story of a fantastic nightmare. My own inference from it is the simple one that it will always recur until the people charge themselves with their own destiny. . . . Ought to be read by every Socialist as an indispensable guide to the peace "—*Harold Laski* (*Tribune*)

" In entry after entry of this amazing diary he piled up evidence on the essentially warlike character of the Nazi regime. . . . During his time in Berlin he witnessed the evil flowering of Nazi barbarism—the murder and torture of political opponents and even innocent and politically non-interested workers, the excesses of anti-Semitism, and the purge of Captain Ernst Roehm and his group. . . . His diary will be a treasure-house for historians of the future. His vivid snapshots of the Nazi leaders—Hitler, Goering, Goebbels, Hess, Schacht, Ley, Rosenberg—are unforgettable. So are some of the big set 'scenes', such as the Hindenburg funeral. Pitiless are his revelations of the moral characters of such representatives of pre-Hitler Germany as Neurath, present Protector of Bohemia, and Schacht. . . . Because Dodd was intensely human there is something of Pepys in this diary; because he had a passion for justice, and a sardonic eye, something of Voltaire; because he was a trained historian who saw with a maximum of objectivity, a touch of Gibbon of the 'Autobiography' "—*Cavalcade*

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" The tale he has to tell explains a lot and (as Dodd might say) *then some*. Do you remember Baldwin denying, again and again, Churchill's revelations about German re-armament? Dodd gives the explanation . . . In September 1934 Dodd informed the British Ambassador of the German purchase of a million dollars' worth of aircraft from the United States, for which the Nazis had paid in gold. He was astonished to find that . . . At a time when Germany was refusing to pay its debts to the Lancashire cotton trade, he says that . . . a mysterious 'British woman, connected with Hitler's inner group', had been in Berlin to sell war equipment for the British firm of Vickers-Armstrong. One day Schacht . . . 'acknowledged that the Hitler Party is absolutely committed to war'. . . . William Bullitt, while still U.S. Ambassador to Moscow, thought that Russia. . . . Of Goering, Dodd paints some pretty pictures. . . . Himmler's favourite sadistic trick. . . . Laval was intriguing with Nazi secret agents as far back as 1935. . . . Lord Londonderry once sat in silence at a Nazi show while Goering. . . . Sir Nevile Henderson was reported. . . . Sir John Simon was regarded by everybody. . . . Polish Ambassador Lipski was convinced. . . . And so "—*Reynolds*

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GOLLANCZ

But the elegiac novel, of which this is a supreme example, must have another most important quality, without which it relapses into sickly dullness: the quality of movement. Tempo in large-scale fiction seems to have become almost a lost art, and here the analogy from music is more obviously useful. Professor Tovey has pointed out that stationary vibration is not movement, and that, e.g., the overture to *Il Barbiere* simply buzzes for eight minutes, at the end of which the listener finds himself exactly where he was at the beginning. The great master of large-scale movement in music is Wagner, and his literary equivalent, for this particular feature, is clearly Tolstoy. The movement of *War and Peace*, like that of the *Ring*, is too highly organised to be grasped at any one point; yet it is ceaseless and so wonderfully varied in rhythm that it conveys a sense of the time and space involved by purely technical means. Now Mr. Ernest Hemingway has recently published a long and portentous novel which critics have invited us to regard as in the *War and Peace* class. There seems no reason why criticism should lower its standards, simply because daily life has had to do so, and it should not be necessary to point out that one well-realised character (Pilar) and a dozen arresting pages in 462 do not make a great novel. But I am here concerned not so much with the exasperating falsity of what I can only describe as the sex interest (one eye firmly fixed on Hollywood), but with the appalling tediousness that results from wading through an immensely long novel of action which never moves along at all. For the rhythm of Hemingway's lugubrious scherzo never varies for an instant: after vibrating feverishly for 400 pages it gives a single lurch and then remains hanging pathetically over the void, like the upper floor of a bombed house. Future generations, to whom the Spanish War will no longer be a sacred subject, will surely have no difficulty in seeing that Hemingway is a meretricious writer, and no qualms about saying so. They may also, perhaps, have rediscovered the secret of tempo in fiction—a secret of which Fromentin, who neither attempts cosmic movement nor seeks to be effective through solemnity, pretentious pathos and other literary tricks, was in possession. The tempo of *Dominique* is in general a slow one, but so cunningly varied that the book never sags for a moment. The main movement is enclosed by a prelude and a final coda, and it contains a central interlude which reverts to the rhythm of the prelude—for a reminder, as it were, that the prevailing mood of the book is a Pastorale and that the author's underlying theme is the hard-won contentment of a life devoted to a small vine-growing community in one of those solitary landscapes which merge imperceptibly with the sea.

The novel might be subtitled "The Portrait of a Gentleman," and now that gentlemen are (largely by their own fault) rapidly being killed off, stifled, put down and otherwise discredited, *Dominique* may shortly acquire the ancillary importance of a *pièce justificative*. However that may be, its lesson—an eternal one—is that romanticism, of whatever kind, leads either to suicide or to misanthropy—is in fact a dead end. And it is no small part of Fromentin's achievement to have surrounded a story of uncompromising realism with an iridescent shimmer of that very romance the hopelessness of which he is pointing; whereby that ambiguous quality which lends to life its beauty informs the style itself, as it were a piece of music tonally centred in two keys—a major and a minor—instead of only in one. And this is the peculiar music of elegiac emotion—of that paradoxical sense of happiness which comes from the courage to bid a perpetual farewell and which renews itself, phoenix-like, from the ashes of the youthful heart.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

TWO GREAT GREEKS

Thucydides. Translated by ELEUTHERIOS VENIZELOS. Edited by DEMETRICUS CACLAMANOS. Two volumes. *Oxford University Press.* Hand-made, £2 2s.; ordinary paper, £1 1s.

"It is the mark of lofty minds," says M. Caclamanos in his preface to this book, "that they enlarge the scope of their energies far beyond the limits which the circumstances of their lives may seem to have assigned. Such was the case with Eleutherios Venizelos. His scholarly endowments were almost equal to his political talents, and had Greece possessed an Academy of the French kind, he would have filled one of its most distinguished posts."

Of these literary gifts his translation of Thucydides into modern Greek is a monument. It was the work of many years, having been begun in 1920 after his defeat, and it was the solace of his time of exile. As he had always held that the great historian had lessons to teach to the present time, and especially to Greeks, but was too difficult for ordinary reading, he made it his aim to make the pregnant and often harsh language of the original smoother and simpler, while, so far as possible, retaining its force. To secure accuracy, he studied previous translations, commentaries, and essays; for the style of the version he relied on himself. How far he has succeeded his countrymen, of course, are the only real judges; but British scholars have borne witness to his full possession of those stylistic merits which are as visible to the competent foreigner as to the native; and one reviewer of the first volume, heading his article "Two Greeks"—a title which I have imitated—does not hesitate to pronounce the translator almost the equal of Thucydides himself. It is plain, also, that M. Caclamanos is a scholar and critic whose literary judgment must be received with respect.

As far as a very ordinary acquaintance with modern Greek permits, I should venture to endorse these verdicts. I have not read the whole work; but I have taken the Seventh Book, that masterpiece of tragic irony and pathos which is likely to compel any translator to do his utmost. Comparing the version of this book with the original, I have seen that the purpose—simplification and clarification—has been kept in mind and attained. Where Thucydides has been too brief for modern readers, a *few* words of expansion have been added. Thus "The Argives likewise" (26) becomes "The Argives also did the same thing at the same time"; "*some* seven ships were put out of action" (34), where the *some* implies that Thucydides is not sure of the exact number, appears as "if I have been rightly informed"; and in chapter 31, where the historian, resuming his main narrative after a long digression, thinks the simple word "then" a sufficient hint to his reader, Venizelos gives us, "as has been said before." Occasionally he explains, in brackets, a technical word; "ten thousand talents" he equates to two hundred and fifty tons; "Neodamodes" he defines, perhaps not unnecessarily, as "emancipated helots." But in general the object is clearness, consistently with brevity. I should not judge the effect to be quite that produced on English readers by Jowett's translation, which might lead many to fancy the style of Thucydides to be as smooth and limpid as that of Plato.

As in Jowett's version, minute scrutiny may, I think, discover here a few slight inaccuracies, or perhaps rather, passages which the critic interprets differently from Venizelos. Some, indeed, may be quite imaginary; one may suspect their existence when, in fact, one is merely reading a text other than that Venizelos has chosen; for he seems to have deliberately rejected many of the excisions or alterations dear to recent English and German scholars.

It was Madame Venizelos who, saving her husband's manuscript, almost by miracle, from total destruction, handed it over to M. Caclamanos. He has done his work well, not only seeing it through the press, but adding a translation of that part of Marcellinus's Life of Thucydides which discusses the question of the genuineness of the Eighth Book, and giving us, in English, a most illuminating preface, which appears also, considerably abridged, in Greek at the beginning of the second volume. The Oxford Press has done its share in the manner one has learned to expect from it. The typography is beautiful and clear, the format admirable. I should hazard a guess that all this has not been achieved without the assistance of Greeks resident in England, who are thus showing, in another way, the same patriotism which their compatriots at home are now displaying in so glorious a fashion.

E. E. KELLETT

VERMEER

Vermeer. *Allen & Unwin.* 12s. 6d.

Why is a book such as this disfigured with coloured plates? These "chromos" would be in place only on the cover of a Christmas Number or on one of those calendars with which small tradesmen seek to propitiate their customers about the turn of the year. It is not only that they are unlike the pictures they purport to represent; they are not like pictures at all. Open the book at any place where a coloured reproduction faces one of the excellent photographs in black and white, and judge for yourself. For instance, on pages 13 and 12 you will find the famous *Street in Delft* in colour and a detail in monochrome. To anyone who knows the picture it is the latter (*No.* 12) which gives a sense of its tone. Indeed, the colourplate (*No.* 13) is so atrociously bad that, by dint of falsifying tones and relations, it positively succeeds in upsetting the design; and *No.* 13 is not abnormal. Worst of all, very often the entire work is reproduced, or purports to be reproduced, only in colour, a mere detail being given in black and white, so that the student is allowed no complete idea of the picture. Of the Czernin masterpiece, for instance, reduced as it is to sheer nonsense by the colour-process, we are left to make what we can from a single figure—of unsurpassed beauty it must be admitted. And yet one should have the book; for the straightforward photographs are admirable and there are some forty of them. I recommend the amateur to buy it—it costs but twelve and six—and tear out the coloured plates, and these perhaps he might send to the fourth leader-writer of the *Times*, for I suppose they are intended for such as he.

Vermeer is "a mystery," as everyone knows. In a few pages Professor Bodkin tells us all that is known, and the best part of what has been conjectured, about him. His coming is as mysterious as his going; the scarcity of his works is mysterious and so is the fact that for more than a hundred years his name vanished, or nearly, from history. But the greatest mystery of all is his art. To a tourist his pictures might appear almost indistinguishable from those of Hooch, Terborch or Metsu; for not only are their subjects his, but so, superficially, is their approach. All, including Vermeer, see acutely and render what they see scrupulously and efficiently. Yet Vermeer is a great artist, while the rest are but admirable painters. What is the explanation? That blessed word "intensity" is, I suspect, the one that will help. Vermeer saw much as other Dutchmen of his generation saw; but what he felt for what he saw was different, and his emotion conditioned his expression. He felt more than the appetising

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prettiness and pleasant domestic significance of pots and flowers and stuffs, of furniture and musical instruments, of sun-lit parlours and maids with their mistresses; he felt their significance as forms. And so, where the shapes and relations of shapes in a Hooch or a Metsu are charming and suggestive, those of Vermeer are profoundly moving—without help of overtone moving in themselves. Also, when an overtone is allowed to echo through a picture it is of a quality altogether different from the quiet sense of well-being that may pervade a Hooch, or the decent culture from which in a Terborch one can hardly escape. To find something like the sense of music which echoes through *The Concert* (No. 25 in this volume) I almost believe one must go to Giorgione. To his admirable but uninspired contemporaries Vermeer is as Sidney to Drayton. It is intensity of feeling that makes the difference: passionate awareness of the object as an end in itself, and rendering to match.

Turning the pages of this volume the amateur will be struck from time to time by surprising affinities, noticeable chiefly in detail but sometimes in general pattern, between Vermeer and certain modern painters. Looking at a detail of the *Street in Delft*, for instance, one cannot choose but think of Corot—of Corot at his best. Or take the still life from *Girl Asleep*: is not one oddly reminded of Cézanne? While here and there—consider the painting of the head and background in *Girl With the Red Hat* (*No.* 39)—are passages which might lead to the notion that Degas, and even Bonnard, owed something to the Dutch master. Of the apparent nineteenth-century Frenchness of Lady Beit's picture I believe other explanations have been offered.

These startling encounters may induce some curious student to enquire whether by any possibility the Frenchmen could have been influenced by the master of Delft. The answer, I feel pretty sure, is "No." The little, lovely *Dentellière* in the Louvre might conceivably have had some effect on Corot had he ever studied it. But there is no reason to suppose that he did: truth to tell, Corot was not much given to studying other people's work. Cézanne, if he ever saw the picture—since he was never in Holland he is unlikely to have seen others—would hardly have looked at it: *a priori* he would have disapproved. As Degas and Bonnard were scholars they may have been exposed to infection, but I am sure they caught nothing. It would, however, sound clever, and might be true, to say that occasionally a vague similarity could arise from the fact that they, like Vermeer, were influenced by a sudden revelation of Oriental art. Anyhow, such resemblances as may be discerned between certain modern paintings and the *Red Hat* are less likely to be reckoned arguments in favour of Vermeer's influence than arguments against the authenticity of the Washington picture.

CLIVE BELL

A NEW MODEL FOR EDUCATION

The Future in Education. By SIR RICHARD LIVINGSTONE. *Cambridge University Press.* 3*s.* 6*d.*

I cannot do better than summarise the argument of this important little book. First, it is assumed that education in the widest sense is desirable. Sir Richard defines it as that which "gives a sense of values and the power of distinguishing in life as in lesser things what is first rate from what is not." When most people are so equipped, we shall have an educated society, that is to say, one in which "each individual within the measure of his powers can make the most of body, character and mind." This may be regarded as the social purpose of education.

This purpose, however—and this is Sir Richard's second point—is not achieved. One has only to reflect upon the vacant faces of one's fellow railway travellers, or upon the numbers of the *Daily Mirror* and *News of the World* which conceal them—the illustration is Sir Richard's—to realise the extent to which it is not achieved.

Thirdly, the studies by means of which an educated man is produced are literature, history, science and philosophy—as Sir Richard puts it, "the visions of human life which religion and poetry and thought have conceived, the 'study of what man is and what he should pursue,' and the record of his achievements in the world"—while, to produce educated citizens, we must add political science and economics.

Fourthly, none of these subjects can be fruitfully studied by the young for the reason that the young have had little or no experience of life, of institutions, or of other human beings. Sir Richard enunciates and develops with great force and aptness of illustration the principle that a subject can only be successfully studied by those who know something at first-hand of its subject matter. The young can succeed with mathematics, languages, and the physical sciences because these are all in their degree abstract; but in regard to those studies which deal with human beings, either as individuals or in the mass, namely literature, history, politics and philosophy, although the young can engage in argument, learn truths and repeat propositions, they do so without understanding or conviction. Their minds are merely plastered with information which, so soon as their education ceases, peels off. It follows that education in Sir Richard's sense of the word can be acquired only by adults in whom theory can be and has been cross-fertilised by practice. The conclusion is that to raise the school age to 15 or 16 or even 18, desirable as it may be on general grounds, will do little to educate the masses.

We are asked, then, to contemplate two proposals. First, residential colleges for all adults from 18 to 25 or 30, which men and women can attend for five months or a year at a time, and secondly, compulsory attendance at continuation schools to bridge the gap between the end of primary education at the age of 14 or 15, and the beginning of adult education at 18 or 19. Sir Richard takes as a model the Danish People's residential High Schools where non-vocational education is given to young men and women whose careers lie in agriculture at the cost of £4 per month, half of which is frequently paid in scholarships by the Danish State.

Sir Richard is fully alive to the difficulties of introducing such a scheme in this country, but he points to the large number of empty country houses as a means of overcoming them, and the largely increased leisure of the future as an incentive to overcome them.

I do not see how it is possible to find fault with Sir Richard's reasoning, or to gainsay the conclusions to which it leads. Unfortunately, their adoption depends upon considerations that lie outside the educational field. Here are three: Do our governors want an educated democracy of adult persons? No, many of them do not. They prefer sheep who are easier to drive and robots who are easier to govern. Do we want to be full men and women whose lives can be made lovely and agreeable by the riches of the mind and the spirit that are brought to their enjoyment? No, most of us do not, for, having never possessed the riches we do not know that they are enjoyable, and instead of loving the highest when we see it, we have been taught by our public school, the pulpit and the press to heave a brick at it. Are we likely to be given the leisure to which Sir Richard looks forward (unless, of course, we are unemployed), except under a socialist organisation of the resources of society? Even if we have the leisure, is any government likely to foot the bill which continued education in early middle-age is likely to entail except a socialist government? I am no economist, but I imagine that the answer to these questions is No.

I conclude that those who are in positions of importance can cheerfully agree with Sir Richard without fearing to be embarrassed by being confronted with the practical implications of their agreement.

C. E. M. Joad

SONG

Words for Music. By V. C. Clinton-Baddeley. *Cambridge University Press.* 7s. 6d.

In the Renaissance, as in antiquity, voice and verse were on the best of terms. Poets and musicians took it for granted that their arts were complementary. The curse of specialisation had not yet descended among us; it was still natural for the man of education to assume as his heritage not only all knowledge, but all æsthetic experience, and to the Elizabethans a poet who took no delight in music and wrote no songs for singing would have seemed a strange fish. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, however, the harmonious sisters began to look askance at one another, and within a hundred years they were no longer on speaking terms, conducting their correspondence in a series of acrimonious manifestos. Popular poetry—Burns, Moore, the ballad operas—continued until well into the nineteenth century to provide good verse for singing; but the great poets, no longer catering for either singer or actor, withdrew into a contemptuous isolation. Their case against the musicians is a familiar one, and Mr. Clinton-Baddeley has no difficulty in providing amusing illustrations of the senseless distortions and repetitions inflicted by composers on poetry. He breaks newer ground in showing that the poets are themselves almost as much to blame in their refusal (or inability) to learn the special art of writing words for music. Shakespeare and Milton had it to perfection (nothing more singable than "Take, O take those lips away" has ever been written), and the history of English song is a sad descent from these heights to the flat triviality of the Victorian ballad. What was it that happened in between?

In 1937 Mr. Clinton-Baddeley collaborated with W. B. Yeats in some B.B.C. poetry readings, and there followed a series of meetings with Yeats, Dorothy Wellesley, Hilda Matheson, W. J. Turner and others at which the question of words for music was thrashed out. Perhaps one should rather say the subject of music for words: for this was Yeats's only real concern, and his tone-deafness ruled him out as an authority, or even a witness, on the *collaboration* of the arts. Incapable of distinguishing between the pitch of notes, Yeats was abnormally sensitive to their rhythm, and all he asked of music was a rhythmic chant or jig to which lyrical verse or ballads might be recited; accompaniment, beyond an occasional thrum on the harp, was strictly taboo. Mr. Clinton-Baddeley was too good a musician to acquiesce in this monstrous circumscription of the composer's creative genius and insight; he believes in equality of rights, and his central thesis in the present book is that, in all true songs, words and music are inseparable, each designed expressly for the other. "No matter how well they are written, the words of a true song will always be incomplete words." He brings a welcome variety of quotation from poets and musicians to illustrate his point; it is indeed a fault of his book that it often becomes a *cento* rather than an independent enquiry into the subject. Faced by a difficulty, he is inclined to content himself with a quotation—apt enough in itself—from Dryden or Campion, ignoring the

THE COMING WORLD ORDER
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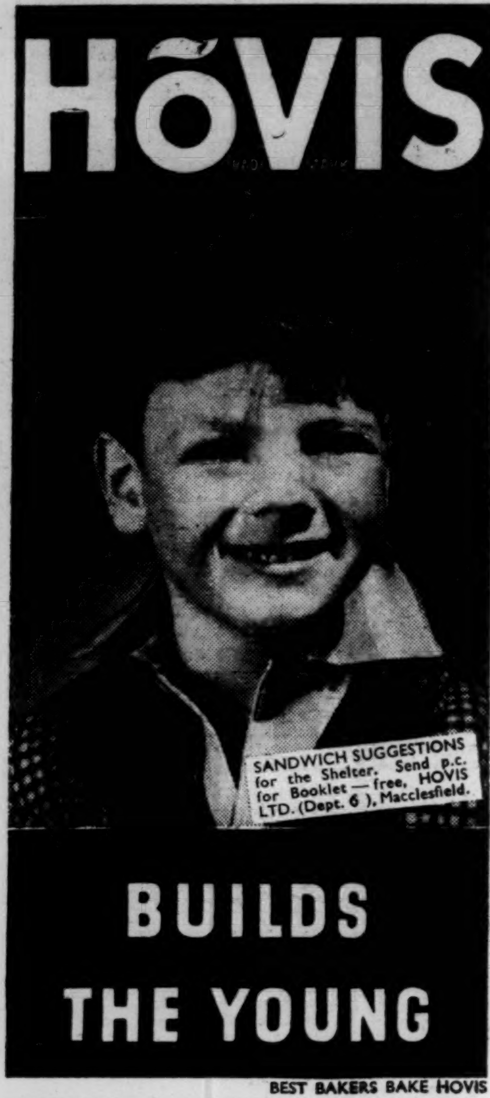

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problems caused by the prodigious development of music since their day, and ruling out altogether the cognate question of opera. Nor has he chosen to consider the development of French and German song-writing, though such an enquiry might have thrown light on the special difficulties in the path of the English composer.

Consider his statement: "The words of a true song will always be incomplete words." The first thing that strikes the eye is that, applied to France and Germany, it does not hold good. What about Goethe's *Prometheus*, *Ganymed*, *Greuzen der Menscheit*, *An Schwager Kronos?* or Heine's *Dichterliebe* cycle? All these were complete poems, some of them great poems, before Schubert, Schumann or Wolf touched them. Nor did Verlaine write his verse, I think, with an eye on Fauré or Debussy. Mr. Clinton-Baddeley devotes an appreciative footnote to *Pelléas et Mélisande,* without seeming to realise what a hole that masterpiece makes in his theory; so far from having designed his play for music, Maeterlinck grumbled for years at Debussy's cheek, and would not consent to hear the opera for years after its production. (The other day he heard it for the second time, in Philadelphia—and in English!) Yet if his name lives, it will be thanks to Debussy's music; the unwilling collaboration was perfect.

Nevertheless, I think there is some truth in the contention that words must be written expressly for music; in English at least it seems to be so. If asked to justify so arbitrary a distinction, I should point to the course of musical development since the seventeenth century. One of the cardinal features of the European musical scene in the past two centuries has been the emergence of *bel canto,* the slow, long-drawn-out *Cantabile espressivo*; without pausing to consider whether voice or strings initiated this style, we may note its dominance in the Handel *aria*, the violin music of the Italian school, the Bellini *cavatina* and the great instrumental *adagios* of Mozart, Beethoven and Chopin. So rich has this vein proved itself that it has become the aim of all instrumentalists (even of pianists) to mould their phrases into a "singing" style, and a Toscanini rehearsal resolves itself into the continuous injunction: "Cantare, cantare, sempre cantando." Paradoxically, the singing style they aim at is itself far more instrumental than, say, medieval or lutanist songs; far more developed, that is, in sustaining power, fluency and flexibility. In effect, voice and instrument began in the eighteenth century to approximate in style, and a school of singers arose capable of rendering with extreme precision and beauty the noble or voluptuous curves of extended melody. (We are now watching the last flicker of this school in the pathetic, dying wail of the crooner.)

In art, however, an increase of sensibility in one direction is always paid for by a decline in another; and what vocal music gained in expressive and decorative beauty it lost in simplicity, verse and spontaneity. The French and German song-writers succeeded marvellously in bridging the gulf because their languages, though to a lesser degree than Italian, could support these sustained and elaborate melodic curves; but to such uses the English language proved itself intractable. Already in the preface to *Albion and Albanius* Dryden admitted the inferiority of English as a lyrical vehicle with a cheerfulness which would enrage those modern Puritans who wish to banish opera in German and Italian wholly from our shores. And what was true in 1685 became even truer after two hundred years. The root of the trouble is the impossibility of producing resonant tone on the closed English vowels of such words as "love," "dead," "kill," "look"; on any such word a sustained note produces an absurdly inflated effect; and it is this, rather than the stupidity of translators, which makes most operas sound so unspontaneous and repellent in English. Rapidity and wit, as Professor Dent has discovered, transfer easily enough to our tongue, and English is well suited to songs of a pathetic simplicity. It is *cantilena* which defeats us: without their open Italian vowels *Dove sono* and *Casta diva* are impossible. An author who, like Campion or Gay or Gilbert, instinctively understands this disability of ours will avoid the kind of rhythm and diction which calls for sustained emotional melody; and it is for this reason that English composers seldom tackle successfully a poet's pre-existing words, and are never at home in the heroic world of grand opera.

I hope to review shortly a book about a great singer (John McCormack) which throws further light on these problems. I recommend *Words for Music* as a well-written introduction to its subject, and hasten to add that it is only considerations of space which have made me appear to disagree more than I agree with its author. Most of what he says is excellent sense, and he is often amusing; as when he remarks that the words of modern popular ballads are "always wildly untrue," quoting

I love every mouse
In that old-fashioned house.

DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

POETRY CAN BE WRITTEN IN WARTIME

Plant and Phantom. Poems by LOUIS MACNEICE. *Faber.* 6s.

This is, very easily, Mr. MacNeice's best book of poems. I should like to recommend it in such a way that those outside the comparative few who read modern poetry would venture their six shillings on it. There are barriers to any such recommendations. Prejudice number one: All modern poetry is unintelligible except to people somehow "in the know." Prejudice number two: It's wartime, and no good poetry can be written in wartime, or alternatively, anyone who can write good poetry now is thereby suspect. The first objection is probably unsurmountable: it is as difficult to convert a literary die-hard as an old cavalryman to tanks. The second, being more intelligent, is easier to come to grips with. Where it goes wrong is not so much in assuming (with Yeats) that war is a cessation of experiences possible to poetry—which might have been partly true of 1914-18—as in making the black-and-white division of war and peace. The war poetry of the present was being written five, ten years by Auden and others, and if some of these poets write less now about war than they did, it is because that phase of their writing is already ending. The division in *Plant and Phantom* between poems written before and after September, 1939, is largely an arbitrary one. All the poems are given dates; some are last year's, some date back to 1938; but essentially everywhere it is the same world in which the poet moves. True, his experience has not lain for the most part in one of the many "front lines" of this war; what he communicates is rather a wartime poetry than war-poetry. As such, it is balanced, quick, glancing, sensuous, true to time and place, and—this is where I hope to appeal to the "average reader"—continuously and excitingly readable.

At times in the past this facility of Mr. MacNeice's has had drawbacks. It has led him into a light imitation of others, into some posturing and the development of a slapdash flair. One has imagined him—at times in his *Autumn Journal*, for example—rather easily delighted with himself and with his knack of trilling out words. Give him a fine day, or a Channel crossing, or an evening at the dogs, and he would make a poem of it, like a reporter on the job. *Plant and Phantom*, though lacking nothing in journalistic dash, makes an altogether stronger impression. He is still the brilliant reporter—witness this account of Dublin:

With her seedy elegance,
With her gentle veils of rain,
And all her ghosts that walk
And all that hide behind
Her Regency façades—
The catcalls and the pain,
The glamour of her squalor,
The bravado of her talk.
The lights jig in the river
With a concertina movement,
And the sun comes up in the morning
Like barley-sugar on the water
And the mist on the Wicklow hills
Is close, as close
As the peasantry were to the landlord. . .

Much of his verse gives the sensation of mood, of place, of being here and nowhere else—London, Ireland or America provides the scene; and wherever he goes he seems to slip in like a hand into glove, with as much lightness and assurance. His is essentially a light verse (the phrase shouldn't be restricted to the facetious genre), and everywhere this lightness is matched by gaiety of detail and image. "The lights jig in the river With a concertina movement" is carelessly, exactly right in its place. Whatever the theme or its implications, just so much emphasis is given as is needed. In the section called "The Coming of War," for example, there is a poem "Galway" which begins with these stanzas:

O the crossbones of Galway,
The hollow grey houses,
The rubbish and sewage,
The grass-grown pier,
And the dredger grumbling
All night in the harbour;
The war came down on us here.

Salmon in the Corrib
Gently swaying
And the water combed out
Over the weir
And a hundred swans
Dreaming on the harbour:
The war came down on us here. . . .

There, nothing is underlined, and yet everything is adequate. Probably more bad verse is written through wanting to feel too much than through feeling too little. In nearly all the poems of *Plant and Phantom*, even the sketchiest, feeling and expression have the same cool, curious lift.

Several of the poems have the general title "Novelettes." "Order to View," though not among them, shows how much Mr. MacNeice's art has in common with the short story; it is admirable in itself, but one looks for a parallel in prose—Turgenev, perhaps.

It was a big house bleak;
Grass on the drive;
We had been there before
But memory, weak in front of
A blistered door, could find
Nothing alive now;
The shrubbery dripped, a crypt
Of leafmould dreams; a tarnished
Arrow over an empty stable
Shifted a little in the almost wind.

And wishes were unable
To rise; on the garden wall
The pear-trees had come loose
From rotten loops; one wish,
A rainbow bubble, rose,
Faltered, broke in the dull
Air—what was the use?
The bell-pull would not pull
And the whole place, one might
Have supposed, was deadly ill:
The world was closed.

And remained closed until
A sudden angry tree
Shook itself like a setter
Flouncing out of a pond
And beyond the sombre line
Of limes a cavalcade
Of clouds rose like a shout of
Defiance. Near at hand
Somewhere in a loose-box
A horse neighed
And all the curtains flew out of
The windows; the world was open.

Within this light key Mr. MacNeice can play a number of tunes: a jazzy lyric on the talkers in a café, lyrics with sex or nostalgia or war-menace or country quiet as the theme. He never overstates; he never lets his mood curdle. That, in these days, is something of an achievement.

G. W. STONIER

The Gestapo Defied. By MARTIN NIEMÖLLER. *Hodge.* 6s.

The title of this book must not be misinterpreted. Pastor Niemöller has confined his message strictly to the field of religion. He is hardly less severe on bourgeois democracy and Russian Communism than on Nazism. The world in which we live, he says, no longer knows God, though it proclaims God when this seems expedient. Niemöller, we believe, never professed himself a pacifist, and yet, read to-day, the similarity between his preaching and that of Christian pacifism is remarkable. In the sermon "Hearing *v.* Doing" he writes of the possibility of fighting on the right side, without seeing that we are not fighting because of the love of God for men and women, but because of human or moral indignation against those who offend our sacred conviction. In that case, he maintains, we are fighting for our own hand; we may end by losing our faith in our fight for faith. The translation is excellent. Pastor Niemöller's language is simple but extraordinarily powerful. He loves the parables of the New Testament, and his sermons are full of strong and moving elucidations of them. These sermons are not the work of a comprehensive mind. But their language is memorable, their faith clear, and their courage unshakeable.

Week-end Competitions

No. 588

Set by Raymond Mortimer.

A first prize of Two Guineas and a second prize of Half a Guinea are offered for the best laudatory epigram, in not more than 12 lines, commemorating the centenary of the London Library.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, May 19th.

2. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 585

Set by G. W. Stonier

Mr. A. P. Herbert's verse postscript of last Sunday might be followed by invitations to poets to broadcast on the situation. The usual prizes are offered for the best extract from a poem (limit 24 lines) that might be written in the circumstances by one of the following: T. S. Eliot, John Betjeman, John Masefield, Patience Strong, Dylan Thomas, Robert W. Service, Cole Porter, or Stephen Spender.

Report by G. W. Stonier

There are few things more exhilarating than good parody, few flatter than imitation. Between the two come various degrees of effervescence. Competitors provided all kinds, except perhaps the very best. On the whole they were slapdash and amusing with Eliot; baffled by Betjeman; out of touch (forgivably!) with Masefield; stimulated by Cole Porter. Robert W. Service and Patience Strong each offered a genre which in the second case was not difficult to improve on. Most of the Spenders were rather feeble, the Dylan Thomases surprisingly acute. Before coming to the prize-winners, here is a selection from the others.

Spender at the mike:

A lamp rubies, and I become the Sun.
My rays strike the neat globe of steel and

my lovely
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Blare like a blot; are conducted along tight
wires my
Straight larynx and your uncurled whorled ear.
You are trees in hushed forests, and turned
flat to me,
Palms for gift, the myriad of green ears. . . .
(D. W. Barker)

From a Betjeman glimpse of after-the-war:

. . . And we shall have Osram in bathroom
and hall
When the bombs fall no longer or fail to explode,
There'll be chocolates and onions and freedom
for all
And the lime trees will flower in Victory Road.
(Jenifer Wayne)

War can add few terrors, though a certain topicality, to the utterances of Dylan Thomas:

Bone of my bone the man from Africa
Who wraps his rations in to-morrow's news
Drives his lost legions down the rib of sea;
Fleshed with my flesh the Trojan gentlemen
With Boney's phantom in the hobbyhorse
Paw the Greek gates, my bone, my bastion.

On seas of glass the melancholy oils
Mark the drowned ships. Golden Cwmbwm-
lais sees
Walking straw-hipped the military girls;
The summer boys that kissed the usher's
ferrule
Now blanco-bright snip at their captains'
hairs;
Under Olympus flowers my father's coral.
(Pamela Hansford Johnson)

Mr. Eliot on the Food Situation:

And when all this is done,
When the soil has been ploughed,
The mothers-in-law, and uncles and aunts,
The husbands and wives and children
Have bent to their piece of earth,
Ferocious and feline,
Have been poking the peevish and intractable
ground . . .
When all this is done,
And the potatoes, tomatoes, peas, beans, and
onions,
The celery and lettuce, the rhubarb, the spinach
etcetera,
And the golden fruit have been gathered and
stored:
Then the Axis' edge will be blunt,
And it will have been worth while, after all. . . .
(H. W. Unna)

Extract from a "Versical Postscript by Robert W. Service":

I ain't much of a fellow, I'm a bit of a rolling-
stone,
I've wasted my life in useless strife and lived
for myself alone.
I've been to the other end of the world on the
trail for the muck called gold,
I've had cards and whisky and women and
wandered far from the fold;
But I've got a hunch what justice is, what
honour and Empire mean,
And I've worked my passage to England to
fight for the cause that is clean. . . .
(F. R. Davies, Pte. 97003493)

Patience Strong (this sort of thing might appeal to one of our more highbrow impresarios of revue):

A lovesome thing is Listening. We listen to the Songs of Spring and when at break of day we wake, our drowsy Ears prepare to take swift note of each delightful Sound, that wafts its echoes all around; the Music of a well-loved voice makes ev'ry listening Heart rejoice, and homely Sounds we joy to hear, the tea-bell and proud Chanticleer. And now with folded wings my Muse has listened to the evening News, and adds thereto her own P.S., a tender touch of Happiness; what though the News is grim to-night, we'll keep all Lovely Things in sight. . . . (Nancy Gunter)

In awarding the prizes I found it difficult to decide between two Eliots and two Dylan Thomases. H.R. comes first with a brilliantly funny Eliot; his title, his cautious and admonitory phrases are closer than any other parody I have seen to the original. Between John Mair and Pamela Hansford Johnson it was almost a toss-up. Both are diabolically accurate in their touch, but the former just wins by being more within the terms of the competition, and is awarded the Second Prize.

FIRST PRIZE

CHARD WHITLOW. By T. S. Eliot

As we get older we do not get any younger.
Seasons return, and to-day I am fifty-five,
And this time last year I was fifty-four,
And this time next year I shall be sixty-two.
And I cannot say I should like (to speak for
myself)
To see my time over again—if you can call it
time:
Fidgeting uneasily under a draughty stair,
Or counting sleepless nights in the crowded
tube.

There are certain precautions—though none
of them very reliable—
Against the blast from bombs and the flying
splinter,
But not against the blast from heaven, *vento
dei venti*,
The wind within a wind unable to speak for
wind;
And the frigid burnings of purgatory will not
be touched
By any emollient.
I think you will find this put,
Better than I could ever hope to express it,
In the words of Kharma: "It is, we believe,
Idle to hope that the simple stirrup-pump
Will extinguish hell."
Oh, listeners,
And you especially who have turned off the
wireless,
And sit in Stoke or Basingstoke listening
appreciatively to the silence,
(Which is also the silence of hell) pray, not for
your skins, but your souls.

And pray for me also under the draughty stair.
As we get older we do not get any younger.
And pray for Kharma under the holy mountain.
(H. R.)

SECOND PRIZE

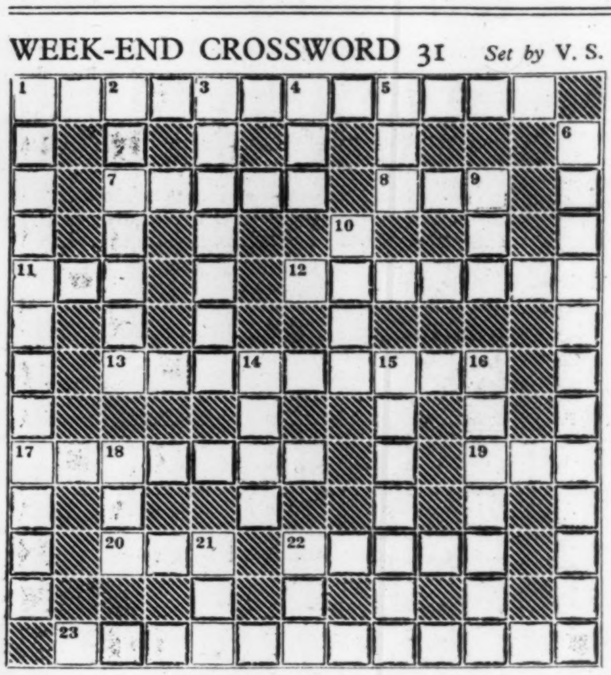
Especially when the wagging microphone,
Telling the world's news and the jackal's
weather,
Breaks woman's circle, tweaks the stilted feather,
Shows Siegfried's suckling at the dugs of war
Dabbling in blood, his milk.

Especially when the after-dinner bomb
Is Caesar's midwife to the womb of town,
When manseed curdles, and the jointed loin
Forgets the neural itch; the April fever
Melts to a knocking fear.

What can the nerve's mouth, the stomach's
rumour,
What can the boneless tongue, the heart's
murmur,
As through the veins of wire the shambling tank
Gropes in a metal anger, the bullet's finger
Probing the harnessed tumour?
Particularly, then, should I be dumb,
Let speech be cordite, words the climbing worm
Waiting a better summer. (John Mair)

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 31

Set by V. S.



The last week's winner is:
N. Johnson, 88 Orme Road, Bangor.

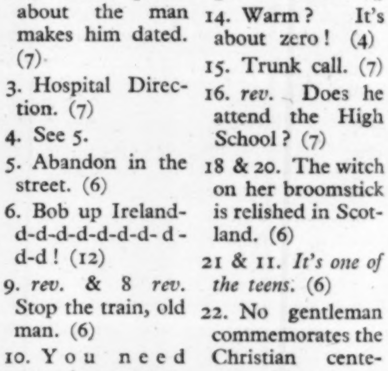
ACROSS

1. Man the boats fore and aft. (12)
7. The doctor was cut when he got married. (5)
8. See 9
11. See 21
12. *Cannot* be remarkable for hospitality. (7)
13. Petty, perhaps, as the accountant's poultry experiment. (4 & 5)
17. *rev.* Make game of Othello—give him the bird. (7)
19. Innocent basinet. (3)
20. See 18.
22. "*Our Mutual Friend*" by Gum! (5)
23. Long for us. (6 & 6)

DOWN

1. There's more than one straight understudy in the game. (12)
2. A certain polish about the man makes him dated. (7)
3. Hospital Direction. (7)
4. See 5.
5. Abandon in the street. (6)
6. Bob up Ireland-d-d-d-d-d-d-d-d-d-d! (12)
9. *rev.* & 8 *rev.* Stop the train, old man. (6)
10. You need several coupons to get a look-in. (4)
14. Warm? It's about zero! (4)
15. Trunk call. (7)
16. *rev.* Does he attend the High School? (7)
18 & 20. The witch on her broomstick is relished in Scotland. (6)
21 & 11. *It's one of the teens.* (6)
22. No gentleman commemorates the Christian centenary. (3)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD



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K	■	A	■	I	■	E	■	B	■	R	■	O
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G	O	P	H	E	R	■	C	A	R	M	E	N
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R	■	T	■	S	■	S	■	D	■	I	■	I
K	I	S	S	■	S	H	Y	■	O	D	I	N
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Y	■	C	H	E	A	P	J	A	C	K	■	R

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By URBANUS

HOME RAILWAYS AND THE NEW MINISTRY—RUBBER AND MINCING LANE—RISE IN WORLD OIL PRICES—IRAQ

THE merger of the Ministries of Transport and Shipping was construed by the market as a "bull" point for home railway stocks. The reasoning was somewhat obscure. It is not disputed that the Government's decision to bring in a War Damage Bill has made it necessary to revise the railway agreement. It is not doubted that the machinery, under the agreement, for adjusting railway charges to increased costs is in abeyance. Costs have risen considerably—without fares—and another demand for higher wages is now being made. Railway net revenues have so far declined that the Government is probably already liable for a subsidy to make up the minimum £41 millions guaranteed under the agreement. But the market somehow got the impression that the new Ministry was not set up to amalgamate the railways or to nationalise them but to continue private ownership while tightening up wartime control of transport from factory to consumer, from overseas port to the firing line. It may be right, but it is guess work. If the railways are already running at a "loss" in terms of the minimum guarantee, there is more point in the argument that the Government has in fact accepted the principle of subsidisation and that railway stockholders have less to fear. I am inclined to agree with this view and even after their recent recovery I would still regard the junior preference stocks of the home railways as suitable ground for the reinvestment of capital turned out of depressed American railroad stocks.

Another reason why the Ministry of Supply should relieve itself of the task of controlling raw materials, and get on more ferociously with the job of tank production, is that it is not particularly brilliant in the execution of this negative function. It has just decided that the rubber market in Mincing Lane shall be kept open, although the new Rubber Controller becomes the sole importer. The Controller's purchases of rubber will be made through the market on f.o.b. terms. Thus, just as the Government is compensating cotton brokers for the closing of the Cotton Exchange, just as the purchases of tin for British factories are made through the users' customary tin brokers, so the Government is in effect subsidising the rubber brokers of Mincing Lane. In this war, as in any other, sacrifices can never be equalised, but it is a pity that the Government cannot evolve a better system of compensation for the economically bombed or dispossessed than this haphazard one which depends upon the amount of press or Parliamentary agitation behind the business protest. The Government must bear in mind that it is faced with the problem of the economically bombed small shopkeeper which is a bigger problem than that of Mincing Lane.

* * *

It should not have escaped notice that as soon as the Lease and Lend Bill was passed the export price of oil at the Gulf ports of America began to move upwards. All last year the world price of oil, as measured by the Gulf Coast market, was quietly falling. For example, gasoline of 60-62 gravity dropped from 5.75 cents to 3.50 cents per U.S. gallon. This was because the anticipated war demand failed to materialise and one by one the European markets of the American exporters were lost to Germany. At the same time British purchases of American oil were restricted by the supply of dollars. The Lease and Lend Act will, of course, enable American oil to be paid for by Washington and diverted freely to the Democracies for war purposes and if the supply of Iraqi oil is cut off, the war boom in oil may yet be seen. Apart from this, industrial activity in the United States, under the pressure of the huge war programme, is now forging ahead and, of course, the demand for motor fuel will shortly begin to reach its summer peak. The export price of 60-62 gravity gasoline has already recovered to 5 cents per U.S. gallon. This rise in the world price level will benefit not only the American oil companies but the fortunate British companies operating in Trinidad—Trinidad Leaseholds and Trinidad Petroleum Development—and, incidentally, the Canadian Eagle Oil Company which carries the Royal Dutch-Shell cargoes to Great Britain and South America.

* * *

Whether or not the flow of oil to Haifa from the Iraqi oilfields has been stopped, oil is not likely to be a decisive factor in the battle of the Mediterranean. We won the last war without the Iraqi oilfields. The most important source of oil supply was, and will continue to be, the United States and Venezuela. Iraq is a convenience, but not a necessity. It produces about 4,000,000 tons a year and if this supply were interrupted so much extra would be required from the United States, or from Iran, which would impose a bigger strain upon our tanker tonnage. Hence the wisdom of President Roosevelt in putting tank steamers in the front of the Allied shipping wants. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and the Royal Dutch-Shell group each has a 23.75 per cent. interest in the Iraq Petroleum Company. The Iraqi Government is more deeply interested because it receives a minimum royalty of £400,000 per annum from the Company.

MITCHELL COTTS & CO., LTD.

MR. ALEXANDER HAMILTON'S STATEMENT

THE Annual General Meeting of Mitchell Cotts & Co., Limited, will be held on Monday, May 12, 1941, at Winchester House, London, E.C.

The following is the statement of the Chairman (Mr. Alexander Hamilton), which has been circulated with the report and accounts:—

The profit and loss account shows trading profits of £139,343, from which are deducted directors' fees, £500, and provision for taxation, £60,000, leaving a balance of £78,843.

The Preference dividend absorbed £5,363, which left £73,480 available for reserve and Ordinary dividends. The directors propose to transfer to general reserve £20,000 and to staff provident fund £5,000, making a total of £25,000.

It will be remembered that we declared and paid an interim dividend of 4 per cent. (less tax) in July last, and a final dividend was declared at the annual general meeting held last December, and has since been paid. This was 9 per cent. (less tax), and made a total for the year of 13 per cent., as against 12 per cent. for the previous year. These dividends together absorb £42,897, leaving £5,583 of the year's profit to be added to the balance carried forward, which will now stand at £43,607.

The increased provision for taxation will cause no surprise, being brought about by the increase in profits and the higher rates now in force.

It is estimated that the present charge for taxation in the accounts under review is adequate to cover the company's liabilities under this heading.

We have continued the practice of inserting comparative figures in the accounts and thus the changes can be easily seen.

You will observe from the note on the balance-sheet that the total net assets of our subsidiaries is in excess of the cost of the shares, and I need only add that the margin is a very satisfactory one.

During the current year we have fully maintained our position, and have every reason to expect that the year's accounts to June, 1941, will not be less satisfactory than those now before the shareholders.

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